

**MINUTES OF THE 19TH MEETING OF THE GENERAL TEACHING
COUNCIL FOR N.I., HELD ON THURSDAY 11 JANUARY 2007,
AT ARMAGH CITY HOTEL, ARMAGH**

Present:

Mrs Sally McKee (Chair)	Mr Tony Lappin
Ms Aine Andrews	Dr Theo Lavery
Mr Ivan Arbuthnot	Mr Brendan McConville
Ms Rosemary Barton	Mr John McGrady
Ms Dorothy Black	Ms Daisy Mules
Mrs Susan Campbell	Mr Alistair Orr
Dr Leslie Caul	Mr John Pollock
Mr Joe Corrigan	Mr Peter Scott
Mrs Frances Donnelly	Mr Keith Smith
Rev Lee Glenny	Mrs Audrey Stewart
Mrs Teresa Graham	Mr Damian Walls

In Attendance:

- Mr Eddie McArdle (Registrar, GTCNI)**
- Mrs Yvonne McCool (Corporate Services Manager, GTCNI)**
- Mr Barnaby Ball (Policy & Registration Manager, GTCNI)**
- Mr Gerry Devlin (Senior Education Officer, GTCNI)**
- Mrs Carol Bailie (Minute Secretary)**

Apologies:

Mr John Colgan	Mr Dominic McElholm
Mr Malachy Doherty	Mrs La'Verne Montgomery
Mr Charles Glenn	Dr Wilfred Mulryne
Mrs Miriam Karp	Mrs Thea Patton
Mr John Kerr	Mr Gordon Topping
Mr Paddy Kinney	
Miss Deirdre Lavery (Finance & Administration Officer)	

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted. The Council members expressed their warmest wishes for Ms Deirdre Lavery, Finance and Administration Officer and hoped she would make a speedy recovery.

2. COUNCIL MINUTES (GTC/06/Min18)

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved; subject to the amendment that, Mr Tony Lappin was present, (proposed by Mr Joe Corrigan and seconded by Mr Tony Lappin).

3. MATTERS ARISING

Department of Education Review of Premature Retirement Scheme (GTC18/06)

The Registrar informed members that GTCNI are not involved in the Review of Premature Retirement Scheme.

Teacher Survey: Preliminary Report PwC (GTC18/06)

The Registrar announced that the Teacher Survey is to be uploaded onto GTCNI's website and will be available on the Council's research Repository ARRTS.

Cross-nation research into mutual recognition of Teaching Qualifications (GTC18/06)

The Cross-nation research into mutual recognition of Teaching Qualifications has now been uploaded onto GTCNI's website. The Chair informed members that this is an item on the GTC 5 Nation meeting to be held on Wednesday 17 January 2007.

4. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

None.

5. OFFICERS' BUSINESS

2006 Order

The Registrar informed members that GTCNI Officers have been meeting with the Department of Education to discuss the Approval of Qualifications process. Members will be updated on progress at the next Registration Committee.

6. CORPORATE PLAN (GTC19/07/P1)

The Registrar briefly outlined the main points of the Corporate Plan. The Council is committed to:

- ensuring that its operations and policies are characterised by adherence to the highest ethical standards;
- engaging in meaningful consultation with the profession and the broader professional community on issues and concerns in which the Council has an interest;
- the operation of a code of professional values and practice and the establishment of regulatory procedures predicated upon these core values;
- the promotion of a culture of professional excellence; and
- the promotion of the aims and objectives enshrined within 'A Shared Future'.

The Registrar reflected on the past work of the Council in the context of the knowledge economy and society, curriculum change, governance and administrative arrangements, the social inclusion agenda, teacher profile and supply, the regulatory environment and finally demographic trends.

The main objectives of the Corporate Plan include:

- to provide an independent, representative and authoritative voice for the profession on matters pertaining to teaching;
- to promote and maintain the highest standards of professional conduct and practice in collaboration with key partners;
- to enhance the status of teaching as a profession; and
- to develop effective and cost efficient structures, processes and systems to support the delivery of the Council's objectives.

These objectives will be broken down into targets and activities will be set against each target: these details will be included in the Council's Annual Business Plan.

The Corporate Plan was approved by Council.

7. FINAL TEACHER SURVEY REPORT (GTC19/07/P2)

The Registrar provided Council members with a general overview of the survey findings. He pointed out that it was important Council had given the profession the opportunity to express its views on a wide range of professional matters. He also emphasised that the survey findings would provide a worthwhile evidence base for policy development in the future.

The Senior Education Officer followed the Registrar with a detailed review of the survey findings on continuing professional development. It was noted that there would be an opportunity to make these findings available to other stakeholders to inform continuing professional planning decisions. The Senior Education Officer also informed Council that he would be drawing up an action plan to take forward important policy issues that the survey highlighted.

The Teacher Survey will be officially launched in March.

8. Schools for the Future: Funding, Strategy, Sharing (Report of the Independent Review of Education (GTC19/07/P3)

The Registrar introduced this paper and highlighted some of the salient points. It was emphasised that the Minister of Education had indicated that all 60 recommendations had been accepted by the Department of Education. He noted that the intention of the Department was to issue a consultation document and that the Council would respond to that in due course.

9. TEACHING THE REFLECTIVE PROFESSION (GTC19/07P4)

The Registrar introduced the paper and in so doing reflected initially on the processes underpinning the work. He indicated that the Teacher Education Stakeholders' Group had asked that GTCNI complete the work on Competences in 2005.

He further noted that in completing the work the Council had in effect developed a draft booklet to be issued to all teachers. The booklet now offers a rationale for the competences and also sets out what might be deemed the ethical basis for practice.

Concern was voiced that the framework inadequately addressed the issue of Irish Medium Education. The Registrar indicated that his understanding was that neither Scotland nor Wales had specific competences for Welsh or Gaelic.

It was suggested that Scotland did have such competences approved by both GTCS and the “Bòrd na Gàidhlig”. The Registrar undertook to clarify the situation in Wales and Scotland.

It was proposed that Ms Andrews might submit an alternative statement which would be forwarded to the Stakeholders Group.

10. ANNUAL REPORT (GTC18/06/P2)

The Registrar introduced this paper and outlined the four main objectives GTCNI addressed in 2005/2006 which were:

1. to build a broad and dynamic “professional community” and enhance the status of teaching as a profession;
2. to provide an independent and authoritative voice for the profession on matters pertaining to teaching;
3. to promote and maintain the highest standards of professional conduct and practice in collaboration with key partners; and
4. to develop effective and cost efficient structures, processes and systems to support the delivery of the Council’s objectives.

The Corporate Services Manager presented the Financial Statements to Council members which included:

- report on the Annual Accounts;
- report of Council members;
- the Council’s responsibilities;
- Remuneration Policy;
- Independent Auditors’ Report;
- statement of Internal Control;
- Income and Expenditure Account;
- Balance sheet; and
- Cashflow statement.

It was noted that the Annual Report has not been published as yet because GTCNI is awaiting the approval of the layout of Accounts from the Department of Education.

11. UPDATE ON BUSINESS PLAN (GTC18/06/P3)

The Registrar updated Council members on the ongoing work of GTCNI in order to meet the four main objectives set out in the Annual report including:

- Project work has commenced with UCET in regard to e-portfolio and possible use of Teachernet as a template.
- The Annual Lecture is scheduled for March 2007 with guest speaker Prof. Christopher Day.

- To promote the Council's image the Registrar will deliver a series of lectures at Union meetings.
- Issued vetting paper in June 2006 following discussions with the Department of Education re the role of GTCNI.
- Competence framework has been finalised and published.
- All consultations conducted and tasks completed on schedule and Disciplinary Procedure rules approved by Council in June 2006.
- Discussions have been held with the ETI regarding how our Code and Education Charter can reflect "A Shared Future".
- Web-based queries signed off September 2006.
- Communications Module signed off August 2006.
- Initiate and deliver i-membership project by February 2007.

The Corporate Services Manager took members through the income and expenditure from 1 April 2006 to 31 October 2006 and projected expenditure to 31 March 2007. She stated that the total funds available at 31 October 2006 was £1,456,846.89, which was made up of Council's income for 2006/07 up to 7 October 2006 £1,187,601.89 and an opening balance from 2005/06 £269,245.00. However reserves amounting to £300,000 and an actual spend of £560,309.83 reduced total funds available at 7 October 2006 to £596,537.06. Projected expenditure to 31 March 2007 is £458,969 reducing remaining funds to be allocated to £137,568.06. Ongoing projects to be allocated amounting to £119,500, made up of CPD Bursary programme, Competence Booklets for 26,000 teachers, Professional Scanner and Colour Photocopier reducing available funds to £18,068.06 after project allocation for year end 31 March 2007.

Council thanked the Registrar and the Corporate Services Manager for their effort and hard work in producing the Annual Report and Business Plan Update.

10. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Corporate Services Manager outlined the process for the re-election of Vice Chair. This will be carried out by postal ballot, the same format as the Chair.

11 January 2007	Nomination period opens
17 January 2007	Nomination period closes 12 noon
22 January 2007	Statement from nominees received 5 pm
24 January 2007	Ballot papers issued
2 February 2007	Ballot closes 12 noon
2 February 2007	Results announced 3 pm.

11. REGULATIONS

The Chair reminded members that the Council's work depended on the attendance of Council members. She noted that an absence for 3 or more consecutive Council meetings may result in a member losing their position on Council.

12. COMMITTEE MINUTES

(i) General Purposes and Finance Committee (GP&FC/06/Min18)

Mr Allistair Orr informed members that the minutes of the General Purpose & Finance Committee meeting were an accurate record of the meeting. Dr Wilfred Mulryne was appointed Vice-Chair. The Chair of the General Purpose and Finance Committee also stated that GTC are still awaiting the Department's approval on the format of the accounts. Miss Claire Neeley and Miss Eithne Nic Giolla Catháin have commenced employment as Registration Officers.

(ii) Registration Committee (RC/06/Min15)

Mr Peter Scott presented the Registration Committee minutes to Council as an accurate record of the meeting. Mrs Frances Donnelly was appointed Vice-Chair. The Chair of the Registration Committee also stated that a work programme associated with 'Approval of Qualifications' is still the subject of discussions with DE and that the Registration Team is still awaiting some 30 school list returns to complete this data gathering exercise.

(iii) Policy Committee (PC/06/Min19)

At the last Policy Committee meeting Mr Tony Lappin was appointed Chairperson and Mrs Audrey Stewart Vice-Chair. The Vice Chair of the Policy Committee informed members that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting and quickly highlighted the discussions that took place.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

14. VENUE, DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Council meeting will be held in the Radisson Roe Hotel, Limavady on Thursday 19 April 2007.

Signed: _____ Date: _____