

**MINUTES OF THE 18TH MEETING OF THE GENERAL TEACHING
COUNCIL FOR N.I., HELD ON TUESDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2006,
AT STORMONT HOTEL, BELFAST**

Present:

Mrs Sally McKee (Chair)	Mrs Teresa Graham
Ms Aine Andrews	Mrs Miriam Karp
Mr Ivan Arbuthnot	Mr Brendan McConville
Ms Rosemary Barton	Mr Dominic McElholm
Ms Dorothy Black	Mr John McGrady
Mrs Susan Campbell	Ms Daisy Mules
Dr Leslie Caul	Mr Alistair Orr
Mr John Colgan	Mrs Thea Patton
Mr Joe Corrigan	Mr John Pollock
Mr Malachy Doherty	Mr Keith Smith
Mrs Frances Donnelly	Mrs Audrey Stewart
Mr Charles Glenn	Mr Damian Walls
Rev Lee Glenn	

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)
Miss Deirdre Lavery (Finance & Administration Officer, GTCNI)
Mrs Carol Bailie (Minute Secretary)
Ms Irene Hunter (GTC Scotland)
Mr Gary Brace (GTC Wales)
**Mr Michael Kane & Mr Richard Nugent (Pricewaterhouse
Coopers) for Agenda Item 8**

Apologies:

Mr John Kerr	Mrs La'Verne Montgomery
Mr Paddy Kinney	Dr Wilfred Mulryne
Mr Tony Lappin	Mr Peter Scott
Dr Theo Laverty	Mr Gordon Topping

1. INSTALLATION OF CHAIRPERSON

The Registrar welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new Council. He thanked everyone for their support and co-operation with the election of Chairperson and called upon Mrs Sally McKee to take her position as Chairperson for the first time.

Mrs McKee expressed how delighted and honoured she was to be elected Chairperson and thanked all Council members for their support throughout the election process.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted.

3. COUNCIL MINUTES (GTC/06/Min16)

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

4. MATTERS ARISING

Draft Response to Consultation Paper from Professor Bain (GTCNI17/06)

The Registrar informed members that the Bain Report is expected on 24 November 2006.

Disciplinary Rules (GTC17/06)

The Registration and Policy Manager identified milestones to date on progress with the making of the necessary Disciplinary Regulations by the Department. Further primary powers need to be sought; these powers will be delivered through RPA legislation scheduled for May or June 2007. The Department has indicated that it would hope to have the regulations in place for September 2007, however, this is contingent on the passing of the RPA legislation.

5. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

The Chair welcomed retuning and new members and encouraged all to play an active role as possible in Council business. She also welcomed Ms Irene Hunter of GTC Scotland.

6. OFFICERS' BUSINESS

Constitution of Sub-Committees of the Council

The Registrar outlined the processes in regard to the allocation of membership of the Council's committees. He noted that all Council members were allocated their first or second choice. He further noted that on the introduction of the Council's regulatory powers two additional Committees will come into force, namely the Fitness to Practise Committee and the Investigating Committee. Members will be allocated to these committees at that stage.

Department of Education Review of Premature Retirement Scheme

The Registrar briefly outlined the proposed new arrangements for the Efficient Discharge (ED) scheme and indicated that it had been suggested that GTCNI be represented on the panel. The Council have been asked for their views on the proposed makeup of the ED panel, it was agreed that GTCNI should respond by stating that any successful implementation of new arrangements would be dependant upon the new processes being suitably transparent. Dominic McElholm proposed that GTCNI should make a positive response to the proposed inclusion of GTCNI. The proposal was seconded by Mr Mc Conville.

Recruitment – PA to the Registrar & 2 Registration Officers

The Corporate Services Manager informed members that 16 applicants applied for the post of PA to the Registrar, 6 interviews were conducted, on reflection the interview panel decided no-one was suitable for the post.

54 applicants applied for the post of Registration Officer, 15 interviews were conducted, the Corporate Services Manager sought ratification of the appointment of Ms Eithne Nic Giolla Cathan and Ms Claire Neely. Mrs Graham proposed and Mr McConville seconded the proposal to ratify the appointments.

The Corporate Services Manager thanked the Council members involved in the recruitment process.

7. ARRANGEMENTS FOR ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRPERSON

The Registrar outlined the process for the election of Vice Chair-person. This will be carried out by postal ballot, the same format as Chair-person.

7 November 2006	Nomination period opens
14 November 2006	Nomination period closes 12 noon
20 November 2006	Statement from nominees received 5 pm
21 November 2006	Ballot papers issued
1 December 2006	Ballot closes 12 noon
1 December 2006	Results announced 3 pm.

Gary Brace of GTC Wales joined the meeting, the Chair welcomed and introduced him to Council members.

8. TEACHER SURVEY: PRELIMINARY REPORT PwC

The Senior Education Officer welcomed Mr Kane and Dr Richard Nugent of Pricewaterhouse Coopers to the meeting. Mr Kane gave a presentation on the preliminary report of the Teacher Survey.

GTCNI commissioned Pricewaterhouse Coopers in February 2006 to undertake a survey of 3,000 teachers in Northern Ireland. The survey had 60 questions split up into 8 sections and took approximately 20 minutes to complete. The survey achieved a response rate of 42%. Key findings emerging from the research included:

- 94% of teachers believe that interaction with pupils was the most rewarding aspect of teaching;
- 75% considered policy initiatives were the most frustrating aspect of the teaching profession followed by pay and conditions at 41%
- 59% of teachers do not believe that Government policy is influenced by the voice and concerns of teachers;
- 89% of teachers have participated in some form of CPD in the last 3 years;
- 67% of teachers support a mixed economy funding approach to CPD;
- 68% of teachers believe that the Strategy for the Promotion of Literacy and Numeracy in Primary and Secondary Schools is most likely to improve the quality of education most in NI;

- 82% of respondents agreed with the key proposal of the revised curriculum that will give flexibility to teachers to devise work that meets the needs and interests of pupils;
- 25% of teachers agreed that Performance Review and Staff Development is likely to have a positive impact on the quality of education in NI;
- 72% of teachers felt they have the opportunity to influence school-based educational policies; and

The full report will be published by the end of 2006. The Chair thanked PWC Nugent for the presentation. GTCNI intend to formally launch this report, where the winner of the prize draw will be selected. A question and answer session followed, the Senior Education Officer clarified that the main objective of the Teacher Survey was to provide GTCNI with an evidence base to help produce policies.

9. CROSS-NATION RESEARCH INTO MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS

The Policy and Registration Manager highlighted the key issues of this paper. The 5 GTCs established a 'mutual recognition group' in 2004 to examine and make proposals on a number of specific issues:

- the mutual recognition of teaching qualifications taking account of proposed legislative changes, in some jurisdictions;
- equivalence of registration;
- induction/probation arrangements; and
- de-registration issues across the jurisdictions.

The purpose of this report was to assist the group's work by:

- recording current practice;
- aiding understanding of each others' arrangements, routes and practices and, thereby, providing practical guidance to assist in the respective Councils'/departments' work on recognising qualifications gained outside their own jurisdictions;
- assisting in promoting further dialogue further between jurisdictions in an increasingly devolved context;
- helping to improve mutual recognition processes;
- facilitating each country's examination of their own system; and
- enabling the Councils and Government departments to make individual and joint statements about comparability of standards.

This report will assist the Council when it assumes responsibility for the 'approval of qualifications'. Article 35 of the 2006 Order indicates that the Council will assume the responsibilities, previously discharged by Teachers' Branch (DE), for approving the teacher qualifications that lead to admittance to the Register of Teachers., This process of approval of qualifications will relate to teachers:

- educated/trained in Northern Ireland;
- educated/trained in the rest of the UK;
- trained within and being national of the EU/EEA; and
- trained outside the EU/EEA.

Discussions are currently underway with Teachers' Branch to establish an action plan for transfer of responsibilities, with a proposed 'transfer date' of May/June 2007.

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.

The Annual Report has not been published yet as GTCNI are awaiting the approval of the layout of Accounts from the Department of Education. Council thanked the Corporate Support Manager for her effort and hard work in producing this Report.

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

The Registrar introduced this paper and indicated that the purpose was to introduce new members to the planning processes of the Council and to update them on progress against the targets for 2006/07.

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. Council thanked the Registrar and the Corporate Services Manager for their effort and hard work in producing this Report.

12. CORPORATE PLANNING PROCESS

The Registrar informed members that the Corporate Plan will be brought before all Committees in November for discussion and brought before Council in January 2007 for approval. It is anticipated the Annual Business Plan will be presented to Council in April 2007.

13. MEDIA: PROTOCOLS

The Registrar stated that in keeping with good practice it is the Chairperson and he who are mandated to speak to the media in the name of the Council. He noted If any Council members are approached by the media it should be made clear that their comments should not be construed as representing the views of the Council. Members were advised to inform officers of media interest.

16. COMMITTEE MINUTES

For Information.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

14. VENUE, DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Council meeting was scheduled be held in the Armagh City Hotel on 8 January 2007 at 10:30 am. NOTE this date was subsequently altered to 11 January 2007.

Signed: _____ Date: _____