

**Minutes of the 71st meeting of the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland
Thursday 5 March 2020 – Chimney Corner Hotel, Newtownabbey**

Present: Brendan Morgan (Chair), Raymond Beggs (RB), Martin Cromie (MC), Ciara Duffy (CD), Dr Graham Gault (GG), Dr Martin Hagan (MH), Fiona Kane (FK), John Kelly (JK), Shaunagh Lambe (SL), Emma Loughridge (EL), Lisa Magennis (LM), Siobhan McElhinney (SMcE), Sonia McGowan (SMcG), Shirley McKenna (SMcK) Julian Morgan (JM), Maria Mullally (MM), Catriona Mullan (CM), Paul O’Doherty (PO’D) Cliodhna Scott-Wills (CSW), Keith Smith (KS), Maria Thomasson (MT), John Unsworth (JU), Mary-Lou Winchborne (MLW).

In attendance: Sam Gallaher (CEO), Gerry Devlin (SEO), Majella Matthews (F&CM), Sima Gondhia (SG), Elizabeth Lorimer. Alison Chambers (AC) DE, Alan Boyd (AB) DE.

Apologies: Aine Andrews, Dr David Joseph Baxter, Geri Cameron, Catherine McBride, Susan Parlour, Gordon White, John Wilkinson.

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies	<u>Action</u>
<p>The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair advised that SEO had an announcement to make. Members were advised of plans to establish an Accreditation Sub-Committee for the purposes of BEd accreditation, that the Sub-Committee needs to have six or seven members and two Council members had already volunteered. An email will be circulated post meeting seeking further volunteers. The requirement is two member teachers who have post-primary experience, two member teachers with primary experience and a further two having experience with special or additional needs children.</p> <p>The apologies were noted as detailed above.</p>	<u>SEO & All</u>
2. Declarations of Interest	
<p>The Chair advised he had issued a form to Members prior to the meeting and asked Members if there were any declarations of interest. No one declared any interests.</p>	
3. Minutes from last Council meeting (02.10.2019)	
<p>The CEO advised there was an attempt to close off all business at the previous meeting of 2nd October. A meeting was arranged to close off the minutes, but it was not quorate and was cancelled. The previous Chair has signed off the remaining minutes, but the minutes of 2nd October remain outstanding.</p>	
<p>The CEO advised that a Confidential “In Committee” Minute was circulated to Members yesterday and the Chair advised these would be collected from Members after today’s meeting. Council Members proceeded to review these minutes and discussed how they should be signed off. It was agreed by Council that a vote be taken from the Members who were in attendance at the meeting of 2nd October.</p>	

<p>The Chair referred to an issue which arose at the last Council meeting where it was thought Council should acknowledge to the Board of Governors of Schools that Members are thanked for giving their time to Council. The Chair proposed to write to the Chair of the Board of Governors in this regard. Members stated preference for the letter to come from the Council and the Chair noted this.</p> <p>Proposed CM Seconded PO'D</p> <p>6. DE Monthly Oversight meetings – feedback This item was taken “In Committee” and Officers (except CEO) left the meeting.</p> <p>7. HR Issues This item was noted as being “In Committee” therefore the Chief Executive left the meeting at this point.</p> <p>12. Governance Framework GTC 20/71/08/1 – 08.3</p> <p>“In Committee” – Items 6, 7 and 12 are detailed under a separate confidential minute.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p> <p><u>Chair</u></p>
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<p>The Chief Executive and Officers re-joined the meeting at 12.13pm.</p> <p>8. Sub-Committee Terms of Reference GTC 20/71/01 The Chair advised that Committee ToRs need to be adopted by Council. There were no suggested amendments and that Committees were comfortable with their ToR.</p> <p>Members sought clarification regarding the HR Committee, in respect of the terms and remuneration of the Chief Executive. It was highlighted there was usually a Remuneration Sub-Committee which dealt with this matter and setting objectives. It was suggested that the HR Sub-</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p>
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<p>Committee would be the most appropriate place to deal with this and matter it was enquired if this was covered under Point 6 of the TOR, Remuneration and Employment matters of the Chief Executive.</p> <p>The Chair advised that oversight currently fell to the Chair as set out in the governance framework, so that would require amendment.</p> <p>The CEO advised that initially a set of objectives was agreed for the first six months with the previous Chair (to March 2019). Nothing had been agreed since and it was decided with the previous Chair to defer the matter until the new Council was in place. This issue is now within the HR Committee ToR.</p> <p>The Chair stated it would be useful if more than one person on the Council provided oversight to ensure there was a fair appraisal.</p> <p>It was noted that the involvement of the HR Committee was detailed in the proposed Corporate Governance Framework and that the ToR of these Committees should align with that framework.</p> <p>Members were advised that an action on Council was the introduction of a Performance Management and Appraisal Scheme for staff and that this has been developed and ready for consultation. This scheme would also apply to the Chief Executive.</p> <p>A Member enquired as to what was recorded in the CEO's Contract of Employment and if a salary cap was in place. They were advised that the CEO salary is on a pay range, not a pay scale and that any increase or progression should be in line with public sector pay policy.</p> <p>A Member asked if Council could seek clarification from the previous minutes to ensure the Chief Executive was not being disadvantaged. The Chief Executive advised that matters are detailed in the Contract of Employment.</p> <p>Members approved each of the ToR::</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1. Audit and Risk Assurance</td> <td>Proposed Seconded</td> <td>PO'D RB</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Finance & General Purposes</td> <td>Proposed Seconded</td> <td>KS</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Policy, Regulation, Registration</td> <td>Proposed Seconded</td> <td>LM JM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. HR Committee</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>The Committee Chair advised that the HR Committee TOR should mirror the tenure of the Chair of the Council in respect of Chair and asked if that could be noted in the ToR. The CEO advised that Chairs were elected for 2 years under Standing Orders and that detail would be added to the ToR.</p>	1. Audit and Risk Assurance	Proposed Seconded	PO'D RB	2. Finance & General Purposes	Proposed Seconded	KS	3. Policy, Regulation, Registration	Proposed Seconded	LM JM	4. HR Committee			<p><u>Action</u></p>
1. Audit and Risk Assurance	Proposed Seconded	PO'D RB											
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3. Policy, Regulation, Registration	Proposed Seconded	LM JM											
4. HR Committee													

<p>Lack of clarity as to why GTCNI is in “Special Measures” was cited. The Committee had discussed the circulation of minutes and agreed to defer the election of Chair/Vice-Chair until their next meeting. The main points highlighted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee desire to review policies. • Increase in pension liability in 18/19 and impact on reserves. • ARAC requiring assurance that other Committees are focusing on those corporate risks within their remit. • Concern over progress of procurement of new registration. • The presentation of the report has been improved. • Review of CRR and subsequent action plan to address risk. • Number of risks progressing to ‘red’ status • Concern over DE report on review of Information Governance & Management in GTCNI tabled at the meeting. <p>Main items discussed at the second meeting were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GTCNI Workplace Survey and HR Action Plan. • Information Management Review – issues of risk for the organisation that need addressing. • Action Plan – the Chief Executive was asked about the plan for the IT Register for teachers and Committee felt there needed to be a plan in place to address these issues. • Risk Register – concern expressed over the level of risk and the suggestion that Council needs to hold a risk management workshop to assess the whole risk and agree priorities. <p>Members were informed that the HR Action Plan was adopted by the previous Council in October 2019. The paper had been omitted accidentally from the papers circulated to the HR Committee but had been referenced and touched on. CEO apologised indicating It would be a substantive item for discussion at the next HR Committee meeting.</p> <p>Some members voiced concern over this omission. JU said that the revised Action Plan had been referenced and they were assured it was there and being dealt with. JU advised that it is appropriate that this should be dealt with by the HR Committee and Council can request that the HR Committee consider it.</p> <p>It was highlighted that members of the HR Committee had been presented with a lot to come up to speed with especially at a first meeting and recognised the job of work to be done. That Council had a duty of care to all staff and any lack of capacity in taking things forward needed to be addressed.</p> <p>The Chief Executive advised that the HR action plan was a key item of work for the HR Committee.</p> <p>It was asked that individual Committees take cognisance of the Risk Register and use it as a method of communication for</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p>
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<p>Council members and Committees to look at the Risk Register in terms of areas within their remit.</p> <p>It was agreed the Corporate Risk Register be a standing item on the agenda of all Committees.</p> <p>Proposed RB Seconded SMcE</p> <p>The Council broke for lunch at 1.30pm and the meeting resumed at 2.00pm</p> <p>(b) Finance & General Purposes Meeting (draft minutes/Finance report/capital projects update/accommodation report) GTC 20/71/05.1-05.4</p> <p>The Chair (KS) provided a report highlighting the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A projected end year financial position within the 1% DE tolerance limit on agreed budget • Projected £80k HR related expenditure due to emerging issues, grievances and Industrial Tribunal cases. • New website developed with capital budget of £30k • Registration system repair projects with cost £187K over two years with capital element being taken from reserves in coming months. • Business Case submitted for registration system repair; DE approval now granted. • New replacement registration project progressing in terms of, project management procurement, procurement of consultancy support for business case and consideration of market testing exercise. • Consideration of alternative accommodation. The current lease in Albany House due to expire 31st March.2020. Extension being considered to allow time for consideration of alternative options identified. Development of Business Case has been proposed.. <p>Members considered the paper on accommodation and were informed that as GTCNI is an NDPB our accommodation arrangements fall within the bounds of Government estate and therefore the Council does not have total freedom to decide where it locates its offices. Any change will require DoF approval.</p> <p>That GTCNI had been identified as one of the organisations for relocation to James House within the Gasworks site in Belfast. This is a relocation involving some 15 public organisations and will be characterised by “Agile” working. GTCNI had explored this option and expressed reservations. At present GTCNI is not part of this project.</p>	<p><u>CEO</u></p>
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<p>An option to relocate to an HEI campus has also emerged that would appear to offer GTCNI a significant reduction in annual running costs, provide totally self-contained accommodation including the ability to hold Council meetings and fits with the sectorial remit of GTCNI.</p> <p>It is intended to renew the lease in Albany House for a period of 12 -24 months to allow for the consideration of options and possible relocation. Present indications were that a relocation could be accommodated within the current reserves provision of £150k.</p> <p>Members were asked to consider approval to progress the matter to business case stage so an objective assessment of options could be undertaken.</p> <p>Members raised a number of points both positive and of concern, stressing the importance of engaging with the staff in any process, considering parking and transport as well as the accommodation.</p> <p>Members were content to proceed with the development of a business case for possible relocation of offices and it was agreed that a small working group be established. It was also agreed that the Chair of the F&GP Committee (KS) be a member of this working group with the option to co-opt other Council members as deemed necessary.</p> <p>The CEO will liaise with KS in this regard.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p>
<p>(FK left the meeting at 2.34pm)</p>	<p><u>CEO & KS</u></p>
<p>(c) Policy, Registration and Regulation Committee (draft minutes/regulation update)</p> <p>The Chair of Council provided the update on this meeting, summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a small turnout at the meeting and it was agreed to defer the appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair until the next meeting. • Committee considered that draft minutes should be issued as soon after the meeting as possible and be reviewed by members before going to Council. • Committee had agreed the ToR • Corporate Plan was considered by the Committee. • The regulation caseload is being monitored but as GTCNI is not regulating there is the risk that this increases. Assessment of risks being undertaken. Discussion with DE regarding the way forward ongoing but proving frustrating. DSO resource identified to undertake review of “red” flies.– • Update given on Learning Leaders. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership competency development, members considered progress to date and the Leadership Lens development. • Members were provided with an update on BEd Accreditation programme. <p>Members were advised that the work of the Leadership Competency Advisory Group was almost complete and will be considered at next PRCC, Council and Learning Leaders Oversight meetings. The input and leadership of Dr Hagan in this work was highlighted and the SEO stressed that resource to take the work forward under Learning Leaders would need to be considered by DE.</p> <p>The Chief Executive informed Members that GTCNI were also represented on the Learning Leadership Oversight Group and engaged in working group for the development of Standards for Teacher Professional Learning. Council would be updated accordingly on this activity.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Dr Hagan for his input who responded that the development represented a good piece of work but there was resource implications for taking it forward which he hoped would be addressed by DE.</p> <p>Members were informed by a DE representative that DE appreciated the efforts of everyone on the Working Groups and recognised that Learning Leaders was hampered due to the lack of resource. DE were hoping this could be addressed in the near future.</p> <p>(EL left the meeting at 2.50pm)</p> <p>Concern was expressed over the lack of progress in respect of regulation and the potential safeguarding risks to children. A request for this aspect to be clearly identified in the Risk Register (Risk No. 5) was noted. Members recognise the urgent need to address legislation. The Chair pointed out that the present delay was with the DSO assigning resource to DE.</p> <p>The Chief Executive advised that the Permanent Secretary was aware of GTCNI's views and the sense of frustration and urgency felt and that he was following the matter up with both DE and DSO.</p> <p>JU expressed his shock and horror on the lack of regulatory powers and asked if Members could convey as a Council that this is of the utmost urgency and is unacceptable.</p> <p>The CEO advised there was a risks to be managed not all of which are in GTCNI's control. There is a caseload awaiting addressing and communication to individuals in this regard was a concern.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For “In Committee” discussion where an officer or designated minute taker is not present, a Member should be appointed to record and prepare a minute for the Chair. • Draft minutes where possible should be circulated to Members within 7 working days for comment/amendment. Comments to be received within a further 7 working days. • Council to receive both the draft and approved copies of Committee minutes. • Minutes should be as concise and anonymous as possible in a format consistent with Cabinet Office guidance. There should be a brief record of the discussion with note of action and owner. • All “In Committee” minutes to be filed separately by PA to CEO. <p>Proposed CSW Seconded SMcK</p>	<u>Officers</u>
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<p>14. Schedule of Meetings GTC 20/72/10 The Chairman asked Council if they were happy to approve the schedule of meetings as tabled. The Council agreed without issue.</p> <p>Proposed GG Seconded LM</p>	
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<p>15. AOB None.</p>	
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<p>16. Date of next meeting – Thursday, 18th June 2020</p>	
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<p>Signed..... Dated</p>	
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