



Press Release

GTCNI POSTPONES ELECTIONS FOR NEW COUNCIL

20th February 2006

The General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland, as a consequence of the serious disruption arising from the strike by Royal Mail workers in Belfast, has been forced to postpone its forthcoming elections by one month.

Speaking today Eddie Ferguson, Chairman of the Council said,

“Following advice received from our Returning Officer, the Council has reluctantly decided to postpone the election for a period of one month. This decision has been forced upon us by the difficulties and uncertainties arising from the postal dispute. The Council is concerned that considerable numbers of teachers have not, as yet, received the official notice of election and details as to the verification of the electoral roll, and this could result in some teachers not being able to exercise their right to vote.”

He continued,

“The Council is adamant that no teacher should be disadvantaged by this unfortunate situation and in keeping with its corporate commitment to transparency and collaboration has rescheduled the election to ensure that all teachers can participate. The new schedule for the election is available on the Council’s Website www.gtcni.org.uk and will be issued to all teachers.”

Ends

For further Press Information please contact Mark Mc Laughlin Public Relations Officer.

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Notes to the Editor

ABOUT THE GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

The General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland is the statutory, independent body for the teaching profession and is dedicated to enhancing the status of teaching and promoting the highest standards of professional conduct and practice.

It works in partnership to develop and sustain a broad "professional community" characterised by a culture of respect, integrity, cooperation and dialogue.

Council's Profile and Core Activities

Established under the auspices of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, the Council has a membership of 33, the majority of whom are teachers. The Council is constituted as follows: 14 members are elected directly by the profession with a further 5 members nominated by the Northern Ireland Teaching Council. In addition, 10 members are nominated by broader interests within education including the Higher Education Institutions, Employing Authorities and other agencies. There are also 4 members appointed by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland.

The Council's responsibilities as set out in the Education (Northern Ireland)

Order 1998, Articles 34-41, are as follows:

- The registration of teachers.
- The development of a Code of Professional Values and Practice for the profession.
- Disciplinary functions relating to professional misconduct.
- The provision of advice to the Department of Education and Employing Authorities on:
 - The training, career development and performance management of teachers.
 - Standards of teaching.
 - Registration issues.
 - Standards of conduct for teachers.
 - Other issues such as may be determined by the Department of Education

Further details of the Returning Officer's advice to Council regarding this postponement can be found on the GTCNI Website www.gtcni.org.uk.

EDDIE FERGUSON – CHAIR OF THE GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL FOR NORTHRN IRELAND (GTCNI)

Eddie Ferguson started his teaching career in St Patrick's College, Antrim Road, Belfast in 1970 where he taught Religious Studies, Mathematics and English. He was appointed Head of Religious Studies in 1973.

He moved to Cross and Passion College, Ballycastle in 1976 to take up the post of Head of Religious Studies. He was subsequently appointed Senior Teacher with responsibility for: the college's LMS budget and the induction of Newly Qualified Teachers. During this time he also lectured (part time) on the University of Ulster's PGCE and M.Ed programmes.

He was seconded to the North Eastern Education and Library Board in 1996 where he had overall responsibility for the induction of primary and secondary NQTs and the development of the Board's Early Professional Development programme.

In 1998, he was elected National President of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers. He led the campaign for ATL's entry into the TUC and ICTU and was a strong advocate of closer links between the teaching unions.

He joined the newly established GTCNI in 2002 and was elected Chairman of the Council's Finance and General Purposes Committee before being elected Chairman of the Council in December 2004. Eddie has a long standing interest in initial teacher training and the professional development of teachers.