

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, 22 January 2008 at 9.30am

PRESENT: Judy Moorhouse (Chair) Sashi Siva (Vice-Chair,), Martin Allen, Lesley Ansari, Gussie Andersen, Andrew Baxter, Paul Bird, Naz Bokhari, Sarah Bowie, Janis Butler, Liz Carter, Philip Cole, Chris Cook, Peter Cooper, Sam Crooks, Tony Cuthbert, , David Dewhurst, Janet Draper, Dorothy Elliott, Anne Garner, Robert Gordon, Christine Green, Conchita Henry, Barbara Hibbert, John Hawkins, Gloria Hyatt, Max Hyde, Derek Johns, Misbah Mann, John Mayes, Pete McAleer, Robert Millea, Kirit Modi, Michael Moore, Gail Mortimer, Sheila Mountain, Arthur Naylor, Tony Neal, John Rimmer, Alice Robinson, Jean Scott, Gill Stainthorpe, Oona Stannard, Philippa Stobbs (part of meeting), Angela Stones, Pete Strauss, Ralph Ullmann, David Whitewright, Geoff Whitty, Anthony Wilkes (part of meeting) Dave Wilkinson and Nicola Wilson.

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of: Nigel Bowler, Peter Butler, Patricia Castro Castro, Ron Clooney, Anthony Handley, Anne Madden, Bulvinder Michael and David Storrie.

1. **Welcome**

The Chair of Council welcomed the following observers to the meeting Mal Davies and Julia Evans (GTC Wales), Tom Hamilton (GTC Scotland) and John Beattie (Alumni Association).

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 3 October and Matters Arising**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record subject to the inclusion of Barbara Hibbert as having attended the meeting plus a minor typographical correction.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

None at this meeting

4. **Decision Tracking**

The Chair of the Policy and Research Committee updated the Council, following the decisions in July, on progress with the Teacher Learning Academy and the formal governance arrangements; including the process for tendering for the logistics and marketing partners, and managing risks. He referred to the TLA reception for lead schools and partners which would be held later that day plus a conference to be held in March. He also spoke on the development of the TLA, recruitment of schools and the impact of the Children's Plan, in terms of the notion that teaching should become a "masters profession".

In response to a Member question on anecdotal evidence of a head teacher linking the TLA with the new performance management regulations as a compulsory aspect, the Chair of the Policy and Research Committee confirmed that this issue had been raised at the Special Governance group. The Chair of Council added that this would be closely monitored in terms of it not being introduced as a compulsory element of continuing professional development.

The standard paper from the Council Secretary was noted

5 Chair's Business

The Chair and Vice Chair's diaries were circulated in advance of the meeting together with feedback from Council representatives on outside bodies.

The Chair of Council informed the meeting that due to a change in her working position, Philippa Stobbs, would be resigning from the Council in February. The Council placed on record its sincere thanks to Philippa for her services since 2000.

The Chair made a statement to Council regarding the number of candidates for the forthcoming elections and arising issues that would be considered in the overall debate on governance arrangements for 2012.

The Council offered its congratulations to the Vice Chair of Council on her recent appointment as head teacher.

The Vice Chair of Council announced that due to this change in her working circumstances she would, with some reluctance, be resigning from the Council from 9 April. She placed on record her thanks to previous Chairs and Vice Chairs, all Council Members and staff for their support. The Chair of Council stated that the Vice Chair would be attending July Council as a guest which would be an opportunity to thank Sashi for her enormous contribution to the Council. The Council Secretary explained the process that will be undertaken after the Easter holidays for the election of a new Vice Chair of Council following on from the teacher election and the conclusion of Member nominations processes.

Council noted the recent passing away of former Council Member Peggie Harrison and stood in silence in her memory.

In response to a Member question to a reference in the NCSL feedback paper to the Secretary of State endorsing a proposal for the development of new roles and advanced schools business managers, the Chair of Council reported that these referred to bursar type roles and federation of schools.

Council noted the report back from the various outside bodies.

6. Chief Executive report to Council

The Chief Executive tabled at the meeting a schedule of his various meetings, school visits, interactions with the media and speeches given.

His report covered a recent appearance before the Select Committee on Assessment and he referred to the summary of the oral evidence session on 14th January which had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting. The Chief Executive referred to the publication of the Children's Plan and informed Council that part of the response to the Plan would be available at the end of February as part of the document - Workforce Matters. He outlined references to the GTC in the Plan vis a vis moving teaching to a

masters level profession and teacher competency procedures. He referred to recent meetings with DCSF officials on the latter matter and the GTC's proposals around more active forms of registration and the promotion of higher standards of professional practice and enquiry of research based practice in classrooms.

Further areas of his report covered:

- Organisational changes including the recent recruitment process for the Director of Corporate Services
- School visits
- Ongoing work with the Primary Review and Well Being Review and the GTC's planned event in March
- Regular 'keep in touch' meetings with Partners and Stakeholders.

He was pleased to report that the Policy and Research Committee had agreed that former Member Barry Carpenter should continue as Chair of the Disabled Teachers TaskForce.

The Chief Executive drew Members attention to the pending retirement from the Council of Dennis Jones, the Director of Finance and Administration, and he personally thanked Dennis for his sterling service to the Council since 2000. The Chair of Council paid personal tribute to Dennis and the Council placed on record its sincere appreciation of his contribution to the Council.

Debate centred on issues relating to competence referrals to the Council, the operation of the Council's current procedures and a recent article in the Times Education Supplement regarding re-registration. In response the Chief Executive stated there needed to be a full discussion and that this would begin with the working group session after lunch. A Member drew Council's attention to the reference in the Children's Plan to master level qualifications and the Chief Executive confirmed that the GTC was seeking contact with the Training and Development Agency and DCSF to seek further clarity on this reference within the plan but anticipated that the GTC would by September be in a position to make authoritative statements.

The Director of Communications updated Members on the timetable for the Select Committee on Assessment and that the report should be produced after Easter. Finally a Member drew attention to a reference within the Children's Plan to a different process for assessment in terms of stage not age and asked how the GTC will respond to this approach. The Chair of the Policy and Research Committee outlined the Council's position in terms of both the principle and detail.

In conclusion the Chair of Council indicated that many of these issues would be covered in private session after lunch.

In response to a Member question as to the format of future reports the Chief Executive wished to retain a verbal review of current major external issues and would table a list of key meetings, events etc for questions by Members for information.

7 Budget Strategy, Registration Fee and Corporate Plan – 2008-09 and Projected to 2010-11 Ref 05/07-08

The Chair of Council introduced the recommendations from the Executive Committee and informed Council that if the recommended £33 fee was accepted by Council there was no need for Secretary of State approval as the fee would remain unchanged. Members had received private information separate from the public papers providing supporting detail of the individual budget figures and summary of key changes. Other Committees had an input into the continuation or review of short term service priorities linked to the current Corporate Plan prior to a new plan in September 2008.

The Director of Finance and Administration highlighted the key areas of the paper and Members placed on record their thanks to the finance team for such a clear set of budget papers.

Discussion centred on issues relating to the desirability of a full staff review for the 2009/10 budget process, the need for more detail on Teacher Learning Academy expenditure including budget monitoring of the development phase, and the level of cash reserves. In response the Chair of Council stated that the staff review would form part of the budget process for 2009/10 and the more detailed budget descriptions would be reported to the TLA Governance group and be part of the future budget paper. In response to a Member question regarding the level of expenditure on the TLA and the presentation of the various component parts of this initiative as part of the overall budget, the Director of Finance and Administration stated that it reflected the policy decision taken by the July 2007 Council meeting which had full detail on the transitional implications of moving from a pilot to a national framework.

The recommendations in the paper were put to the vote and carried by a substantial majority.

Council:

reviewed the budget strategy as set out in the paper ;

approved the budget as recommended and that the registration fee is maintained at £33 for the 2008/09 financial year;

endorsed the recommended financial viability of the three year budget strategy in terms of the reserves and approved the recommended principle that the general reserve should not fall below 25% of annual expenditure ;

endorsed the extended corporate plan milestones in respect of 2008-09 in advance of the development of the new Corporate Plan 2008-12 ;

noted the underlying fee level assumptions on which year two and beyond are based and the need to review provisional fee prospects as each future year unfolds;

agreed that the 2009/10 budget papers should include a fuller separate breakdown of TLA costs and these form part of governance reporting to the separate Special Governance Group and that the 2009/10 budget process be informed by a full review of staffing expenditure for 2009/10.

8. **Engaging Partners and Stakeholders in Developing the Corporate Priorities for the GTCE for 2008 – 2012 (Ref 01/07-08)**

The Chief Executive introduced the key elements of this paper which reflected his discussions with a wide range of partners and stakeholders who welcomed the GTC undertaking this review of its medium term direction, as well as staff. Further Council involvement was planned for July 2008 and with the newly populated Council in September 2008.

Council:

supported the general direction and approach to the GTC's medium term planning and the setting of its corporate priorities;

indicated their own willingness to be involved in the work, particularly in that of the engagement strategy.

9. **Proposal to Establish an Award in Memory of Carol Adams (Ref 06/07-08)**

The Director of Communications introduced the paper and the work that had taken place since the October meeting to agree the most practical and suitable way forward and the rationale for the conclusion that the Teaching Awards Trust was the best partner for this award, covering the key points raised by Members at the last meeting.

Discussion centred on the nomination process, the quality of the supporting information and the criteria for the proposed award in the memory of Carol Adams in terms of the achievements and success of the individual candidates. In response the Council was informed that the Teaching Award Trust assessment criteria would be used and this included assessing the teachers' commitment to, and profile within, promoting professional development but with additional reference to the CPD profile of teachers, plus equalities and diversity. The Council was also informed that the process would be reviewed at the end of the first year. Further discussion centred on flexibility regarding the number of awards, the benefits to the Council in terms of positioning and profile and the desirability of ongoing review. The Director of Communications stated the best way forward was to build on the pilot last year.

Council:

confirmed its decision to establish an award in memory of Carol Adams;

agreed that the award be announced in January 2008 around the time of Carol's anniversary and launched as part of the TAT's regional awards programme in the Spring and Summer of 2008;

noted and agreed the budgetary provision for the option from April 2008 for up to nine awards and that a review be undertaken at the end of the first year and thereafter.

10. **Summary of Work of Committees** (Ref 08/07-08)

The Chair of Council introduced the paper stating at the outset that the reports for all Committees except Audit Monitoring and Review had been considered by the Executive Committee.

The Chair of the Audit and Monitoring Review Committee informed the Council of the background to the recommendations regarding the proposed self assessment review for Committees and the individual Member assessment of Council meeting effectiveness for report to the July 2008 Council meeting. She also referred Council to the joint assurance review process which had successfully been undertaken with the Chair of Registration and Regulation Committee and that the Chair of the Policy and Research Committee had been invited to the Audit Committee at its June meeting. In response to a Member question the Director of Finance and Administration provided some clarification regarding initial criteria laid down by the Audit Committee in terms of Committee working.

The Chair of the Policy and Research Committee in presenting his Committee's report focused on developments with the future of the networks, the pedagogy review, progress with the Teacher Learning Academy and the Assessment advice and he explained the process for determining the Committee's priorities. A Member questioned the low return rate for the teacher survey and the Chair of Policy and Research Committee reported that whilst there was a contractor failure it was mainly down to a steady decline in responses to surveys across the educational spectrum. The Committee was looking at strategies to address this decline so that it meets the GTC's requirements for research evidence to formulate policy

Council received the report back from the Executive Committee and the Financial and General Purposes Committee.

In respect of the Registration and Regulation Committee report, discussion centred on the decision taken in respect of expired orders, the Registrar provided clarification on these decisions which were public and available to employers and clearly marked on the Register. The Council Secretary explained the process for the ratification of the decisions taken by the inquorate meeting of the Committee and how this complied with the Council's scheme of management. Members discussed, and had some concerns over, the operation of local procedures in respect of referrals for hearings and it was agreed that this would be reviewed by the Registration and Regulation Committee. The Registrar briefly outlined the advice given to local authorities and employers and the statutory framework for referrals plus, advice given in respect of initial conduct referrals.

Further questions centred around references to resolving cases without a hearing and the interpretation of the public interest vis a vis the recent presentation by the Office for Public Management to the Executive Committee. The Chief Executive, in response, referred to the recent publication regarding Better Regulation which is now out for consultation, on regulatory practice and the definition of public interest. The GTC was still to take a view on this.

Council noted the paper

Council agreed the recommendation from the Audit Monitoring and Review Committee that the Council establish a review process on Committee and Council effectiveness based on the outline set out in Appendix 1, which would be further developed on the basis of the first year's experience.

11. Financial and Service Monitoring (Ref 09/07-08)

Council noted the paper.

The Director of Finance and Administration confirmed that fee collection was still ahead of target but there were still some caveats regarding income.

12. Consideration of Motions Notified by Members in Advance of the Meeting –

Sashi Siva took the chair for this item in order to allow the Chair to participate fully in the debate.

Pete Strauss introduced his motion and the reasons why it was put forward to the Council to consider in terms of teacher professionalism and teaching and learning and that the system for assessment and accountability was unfit for purpose. Janet Draper who seconded the motion also spoke on the impact of the Council's advice and to ensure the profession appreciates the work the GTC is undertaking in this area. The Vice Chair of Council then took a number of speakers for or against the motion. Those Members speaking against the motion cited the actions being taken by the Council to address some of the concerns set out in the motion, the support for Council's work on assessment including a high media profile, the issue of resourcing the proposed actions and the need for the GTC to remain an evidence based organisation.

Members speaking in favour of the motion believed it was a significant opportunity for the Council to develop this particular area of work without significant resource implications to raise its profile and to identify the GTC with this policy, but not abandon the evidence based nature of the Council's position on assessment to learning.

The motion was put to the vote and was carried by 37 votes to 8.

Council agreed the following proposal in Pete Strauss' motion:-

To form a Communications Task Group with the specific and single role of developing an effective and creative strategy to explain, popularise and disseminate GTC policy on Assessment and Accountability.

The establishment of this group to be facilitated by the Executive Committee bringing together key Policy and Communications staff and up to five Council members. Resources to support this work to be drawn from existing and future Policy and Research and Communications budgets.

PRIVATE SESSION

The Council went into private session in a number of discussion groups to consider issues raised in the Engagement paper.

The Director of Communications would collate feedback arising from the group discussions.

13. Any Other Urgent Business

None

14. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 2nd July 2008.

The meeting ended at 3.30pm.

Judy Moorhouse
CHAIR