

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, 27 January 2009 at 9.30am

PRESENT: Judy Moorhouse (Chair), Sarah Bowie, (Vice-Chair), John Adams, Gussie Andersen, Lesley Ansari, Flora Barton, Andrew Baxter, Paul Bird, Naz Bokhari, Janis Butler, Liz Carter, Philip Cole, Andy Connell, Chris Cook, Peter Cooper, Lisa Copeland, Sam Crooks, Fergus Crow, Janet Draper, Anne Garner, Eric Gledhill, Robert Gordon, Christine Green, Barbara Hibbert, Jill Hill, Gloria Hyatt, Max Hyde, Derek Johns, Aaron King, Caroline Kolek, Tony Lewis, David Lowe, Mick Lyons, Rajinder Mann, Pete McAleer, Andy McKinnon, Kirit Modi, Gail Mortimer, Tony Neal, Alex Parker, Annette Pateman, Elizabeth Purnell, Sarah Reed, John Rimmer, Alice Robinson, Muriel Robinson, Jean Scott, Oona Stannard, Gill Stainthorpe, Angela Stones, Colin Surrey, Tom Trust, Ralph Ullmann, Stephen Viner, David Whitewright, Geoff Whitty, Anthony Wilkes and Nicola Wilson.

Apologies for absence were received from Peter Butler, Anne Madden and Robert Millea. Apologies for lateness were received from Fergus Crow.

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed Clare Craig to her first Council meeting. The following observers were welcomed to the meeting: Jerry Devlin (GTCNI), Rosa Murray (GTCS), Anne Mullins (Alumni Association), Janet Penman (DCFS) and Toni Fazaeli (Institute for Learning).

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 24 September 2008 and Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record subject to a minor typographical correction and the following amendments:-

In respect of item 6 Chief Executive report to Council – the second paragraph to now read:

‘The Chief Executive highlighted the development of the Council’s parliamentary strategy having regard to a future general election, and referred to a very productive meeting with the Chief Executive of the Independent Association of Preparatory Schools in terms of the benefits of GTCE registration for teachers and for schools, citing registration as a quality assurance mark’.

Item 7

Delete ‘management’ insert ‘issue’ *of classroom disruption*

Under matters arising Council, for clarification purposes, noted that the observer from the Institute for Learning had speaking rights

3. Declarations of Interest

Jean Scott declared an interest in any matters relating to the National College of School Leadership owing to her recent employment at that organisation. All Members will automatically have an interest in the recommendation relating to Member Expenses in the Council paper but as in previous years will have a dispensation to vote on the recommendation from the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

4. **Decision Tracking**

The standard paper from the Council Secretary was noted

The Chief Executive reported that the meeting with the Commonwealth Secretariat regarding overseas trained teacher registration would be held next week. The Registrar reported that the work on competence referrals had started and the intention was to report in June.

5. **Chair and Vice Chair Business**

The diary of the Chair and Vice Chair since the September Council meeting was circulated in advance of the meeting as well as feedback from the Council's representatives on various outside bodies, for information.

6. **Chief Executive report to Council**

The Council had received in advance a schedule of the Chief Executive's various meetings, school visits, interaction with the media and speeches given since the last Council meeting.

He highlighted

- liaison with other regulatory bodies regarding developments in governance and regulation
- GTCE involvement in two DCSF led reviews, namely a wider workforce review of the benefits of registration across the whole of the Children and Young People's Workforce and, secondly, a review on the remits of various educational bodies including the GTCE
- The forthcoming third seminar in the GTC world class teaching profession series on teacher accountability to stakeholders
- A summary of press interest particularly around the draft Code of Conduct
- The revalidation of the GTCE as an Investor in People
- Some organisational changes, particularly within the policy services area.

Questions from Members centred on the operation of the remit review and whether it would address stakeholder perception of possible overlaps in remits between the various organisations. In response the Chief Executive confirmed that this had been part of the discussions of the participating Chief Executives but had not yet been formally considered by the Project Steering Group.

7. **Perceptions of the General Teaching Council for England: Report by RAND Europe (Ref 05/08-09)**

The Director of Communications introduced the background to this paper and highlighted the key emerging findings which included views of key partner organisations regarding the effectiveness of the Council's communications activity, engagement of teachers and of the Council's remit and the key changes facing the Council.

Council welcomed the paper. Discussion centred on the development of a systematic approach to partner management, the cost for this and a planned second audit in 2010/2011. In response the Director of Communications stated that the perceptions audit was just one piece of evidence in the Council's consultation strategy and she explained the cost and the

budget process for both this and the future planned audit and how feedback will be provided to the organisations who took part in the audit. Further discussion centred on the position of various partners who were part of the Council's current governance structure, perceptions as to the current size of Council and the importance of the Council's public interest role.

Council:

noted the information contained in the Perceptions Audit by RAND Europe;

noted that outline budgetary provision has been made for a further report in 2010-2011;

agreed that the full report, suitably anonymised, be released for publication by RAND Europe once the process of feedback to participants has been completed, on or after 1 April 2009.

8. Corporate Plan 2009-2012 (Ref 06/08-09)

The Council received a presentation on the draft Corporate Plan recommended by the Executive Committee from the Chief Executive and he suggested a number of key questions for Council to consider. The Executive Committee had given detailed consideration to the external environment and the activities proposed.

Early discussion centred on the need to make more specific reference to initial teacher education and work with initial teacher training providers, the role of provisional registration and the Council's planned work with trainee teachers this year. A Member made reference to the draft Code of Conduct upon which he was advised by the Chief Executive that this matter will be discussed in the breakout session after the Council meeting and the Code would formally be presented to July Council.

Some presentational amendments to the plan were suggested with stronger reference to outcomes and outputs and the need for annual corporate measures to articulate what success would look like in 2012. Examples were given of a corporate measure for reducing the average time to complete cases and of measures relating to equality and diversity. In response the Chief Executive stated that there was a detailed raft of performance measures reported to Registration and Regulation Committee but assured Members that they existed across all service areas. In respect of equality and diversity he accepted the need for explicit commitment both in terms of leadership to the profession and public and also in organisational practices. Members reiterated the importance of taking notice of commissioned research which needed to be reflected in the final version of the plan and the importance of advocacy and focus on teaching and learning.

Further discussion covered issues relating to the Council's governance plan including the influence of organisations such as OFSTED, the strive for further performance improvement and efficiency within the organisation; possible thinking around an alternative model of adjudication, and the rationale for seeking greater financial freedom upon which the Director of Corporate Services provided some context in terms of the ability to borrow and charge when appropriate for certain services.

Council:

considered the draft document to be a good working summary of the programmes of work planned for each of the Council's five strategic priorities;

confirmed that these strategic priorities correctly reflect the external political context and the full range of the Council's remit and responsibilities;

noted that further drafting work will be undertaken to reflect the debate in Council and any significant developments in the external environment that occur prior to publication;

noted that should significant changes in the content of the work programmes become necessary due to external developments, these will be approved by the Executive Committee,

noted that the Executive Committee will have sight of the pre-publication text, and

agreed that the Chair and Vice Chair of Council be given authority to approve the final text for publication in conjunction with the Chief Executive.

9. Budget Strategy 2009/10

The Director of Corporate Services introduced the paper and highlighted the key areas for consideration including a viable general reserve level and the recommendations from the Executive Committee.

A Member expressed concern regarding what he perceived to be a high level of reserves and that there was an argument to review the budget in the light of this and increases in particular service areas. In response the Chief Executive explained the reason for the recommended level of reserves, based on prudent financial operations, and reassured Members that the Council had reduced costs and were looking at increasing efficiency savings. However for an organisation with no capacity to borrow there needed to be a financial cushion that counteracted any possible risk with fee collection.

Further discussion centred on the 'business as usual' budgets, the current levels of the STRB allowance within teacher salaries and costs associated with the introduction of the Independent Safeguarding Authority. The Chief Executive confirmed that the point made regarding the STRB contribution was a matter for employer organisations. In response to a Member question he confirmed that a fee increase had always been predicated following the decision in 2006 to set a fee level for three years.

Members in support of the budget proposals reiterated the importance of maintaining prudent levels of reserves and that the Executive Committee on a regular basis scrutinised the budget, efforts had been made to secure efficiency savings and that the budget before Council funded the agreed Corporate Plan and priorities. Council also noted that assumptions regarding interest received had been reduced because of the lower interest rates and this was a factor. In response to a Member question regarding ethical banking the Director of Corporate Services stated that the banking tender exercise had been put back due to current uncertainties in the financial market and this was a consideration that would be taken into account in the process.

Council:

reviewed the budget strategy as set out in the report

endorsed the maintenance of a general reserve of approximately three months operating expenditure and the proposed changes to designated reserves

noted the revised TLA budget

approved the draft budget for 2009-10 and the consequent fee increase to £37 for 2009-10, and the indicative budget and fee strategies for the subsequent two years.

proposed a fee of £37 for approval by the Secretary of State

In accordance with Standing Order 35(d) Mick Lyons, John Rimmer, Pete McAleer, Colin Surrey and Stephen Viner wished to record their dissent against the above decisions in (iv) and (v) above.

10. **The Teaching in 2012 Programme and Stakeholder Involvement (Ref 08/08-09)**

The Chief Executive introduced the paper and explained the rationale for the proposals of Council Member and other Stakeholder involvement in the *Teaching in 2012* programmes strategic development. Individual Directors summarised how these plans would be implemented within their individual programme sponsorship.

Discussion centred on the Member Advocacy programme including Member training, and the use of Member networks to help the Advocacy programme, which the Director of Communications supported.

A Member raised the issue of difficulties some Members experienced with release time to carry out their Council duties and this needed to be addressed to ensure full time working teachers on Council could still perform their Council role. The Chair of Council reported that this would be looked at by the Executive Committee in terms of their overall governance responsibility including how practical support could be offered to Members with reference, if necessary, to the Secretary of State for assistance, working with local authorities. In response to a Member question as to why experienced Members were asked to undertake the full Advocacy training, the Director of Communications explained that this was a new programme setting out a revised format for working with trainee teachers, but the programme would be the subject of ongoing review.

The Chair of the Policy and Research Committee highlighted the importance of wider Member engagement with policy development following the cessation of the former Policy Working Groups and this would include both the Teaching in 2012 programme and business as usual projects. The Chief Executive confirmed that he would report back to the Executive Committee on how the Member and Stakeholder involvement in respect of the programmes and also the 'business as usual' and public policy dimensions would be formally taken forward but would have regard to need to utilise fully Member time. In response to a Member question in respect of the scope within the current Governance structure to make changes to the adjudication process, the Registrar stated that various options existed having regard to the Better Regulation principles in terms of a separation of functions.

Council:

agreed the recommendation from Executive Committee that the mechanisms for involving Council Members and other stakeholders in contributing to the work of the *Teaching in 2012* programmes be as set out in the paper

11. **Summary of Work of Committees (Ref 09/07-08)**

The Chair of the Audit Monitoring and Review Committee drew Council's attention to the recommendation for the change in the terms of reference of the Audit Monitoring and Review Committee and the rationale for this proposal and the Committee's scrutiny role. She referred to the recent discussion of the Teacher Learning Academy and the reference from the Committee to the Executive Committee which was set out elsewhere in the paper. The Chair informed Council of the governance review and was pleased that the Executive Committee would be formally reviewing its performance at its final meeting of the current Council year. Finally Council noted that Robert Millea had not been well and they sent their best wishes for a full recovery.

The Chair of Council referred to the business of the Executive Committee much of which was covered by separate reports to Council including the Draft Code. She referred to progress with information assurance work and the first report back from the lead Member for Communications.

The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee referred to the recommendations in respect of the Member Expenses scheme and the Alumni Association. Council believed that the invitation to the Alumni Association should also include a representative of the President if h/she was unable to attend and that the Vice Chair of Council would remain the current Council Member link with the Alumni Association.

The Chair of the Policy and Research Committee referred to Committee's consideration of various consultation responses and advice including Better Support to schools to implement the Race Relations Amendment Act plus a response to the interim report in respect of the Primary Curriculum Review, a presentation from Sir Alan Steer on pupil behaviour and the HMCI Annual Report. The Committee agreed that the Annual Teacher Survey should focus on Accountability.

The Chair of the Registration and Regulation Committee referred to the Committee's consideration of progress with the casework strategy, and their monitoring of various indicators, and the relationship with the Independent Safeguarding Authority including how it will operate with schools and the Council in terms of case referrals.

Discussion centred on assurance of the TLA Governance arrangements considered by Committee and the Internal Audit report on the Election process. A proposed amendment to the section of the revised role and remit of the Alumni Association in respect of Member Advocacy was referred to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Council

agreed the recommendation from the Audit Monitoring and Review Committee that:

- its Terms of Reference be amended with the removal of the review & monitoring function**
- there is a consequent change in its name to "Audit Committee"**
- there be the addition of a specific reference to being able to require individuals to attend its meetings;**
- the revised Terms of Reference set out in annex 1 to the Committee's report on 9th December be approved.**

agreed the recommendation from the Executive Committee that the Council grant observer status with speaking rights at future Council meetings to the TDA and the NCSL

confirmed the process for the Chair and Vice Chair of Council Elections as endorsed by the Executive Committee

approved the amendments to the Members Expenses scheme as set out in the Finance and General Purposes Committee feedback

agreed that the President of the Alumni Association (or their representative) receives a standing invitation to full Council meetings as an observer and referred back to the F+GP Committee sub clause 13 (f) of the revised Alumni remit relating to advocacy for their consideration

12. Performance Monitoring: Quarter 2 2008-09 (Ref 10/08-09)

The Director of Corporate Services introduced the paper and the Director of Communications provided clarification regarding the traffic light rating of the website redesign project and some of the considerations involved, in improving the infrastructure, which had been a time consuming process for the web team and impacted on web content.

Council noted the report.

13. Financial Monitoring (Ref 11/08-09)

Council noted the report.

Council voted to move into private session

14. Procurement of Print and Distribution Services (Ref 12/08-09)

The Director of Communications introduced the paper and summarised the detailed procurement process and the rationale for the tender panel's recommendation.

Council approved a three year contract for print and distribution services with W & J Linney Ltd, to commence on 1 April 2009, subject to agreement of contract terms

15. Any Other Urgent Business

None at this meeting.

The formal meeting ended at 12.40 pm.

16. Date of Next Meeting: 1st July 2009 – in Birmingham.

17. Code Breakout Session

Council received an introductory presentation from the Director of Policy on the development process of public consultation and the context and background to its development.

At the conclusion of the Code breakout session the Chair of Council and Chief Executive

stated their intention to hold an all Council Member seminar before Easter to allow further detailed work on the Code which will have reference to the close of the consultation period. The Executive Committee would submit a final draft for agreement at July Council

18. **Thanks**

Prior to the Regulatory training session the Chair of Council placed on record her sincere appreciation of the services of Tony Dunsbee (Casework Operations Manager) for his work in managing the Council's Regulatory processes as this would be his last Council Meeting before retiring in June. The Council and Chief Executive placed on record their sincere thanks to Tony.

The meeting ended at 2pm.

Judy Moorhouse
CHAIR