**(PRRC/Min/20/14)**

**Minutes of the 14th Policy, Registration and Regulation Committee**

**Thursday 6 February 2020, Albany House, Great Victoria Street, Belfast**

**Present:** Brendan Morgan,Lisa Magennis, Julian Morgan, Mary Lou Winchborne

**Apologies**: Dr Martin Hagan, Fiona Kane, Gordon White and Maria Thomasson.

**In Attendance:** Sam Gallaher (CEO), Gerry Devlin (SEO), Alison Chambers (DE),

Lesley Dickson (PA).

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| Preamble  Owing to the low attendance at the meeting the CEO highlighted the need for a quorate meeting and noted that usually it was recognised that an ex-officio member would be counted in the attendance numbers.  BM suggested that the matter be brought to Council with a view to amending Standing Orders to give clarity on this matter.  The CEO said it would be brought to Council under the Governance Framework.   1. **Welcome, Introduction and Apologies**   BM chaired and welcomed members to the meeting.  Apologies were noted. Members and officers introduced themselves.     1. **Declarations of Interest**   There were no declarations of interest.  The Chair explained what a declaration of conflict of interest was and is to provide LD with the correct wording so that the form can be amended.   1. **Minutes (PRRC/Min/19/13)**   The minutes of the previous meeting had been provided to Council as draft and needed to be signed off. It was agreed that Gordon White, the previous Chair of PRRC, can review and sign off at the next meeting.  **Proposed by MLW and seconded by BM.**   1. **Matters Arising**   MLW said that the minutes were becoming too onerous and there was a need to establish what type of minutes the Council requires  The SEO said the NIAO had guidance for minutes and this should go to Council. The CEO said it would be an agenda item at the next Council meeting.  MLW asked what stage the Newcomer Consultation paper was at present and also enquired about the vacated positions within Council.  The CEO advised that the two posts have been filled by Geri Cameron and Catherine McBride.  The Chair asked if the Council was discriminating against sub-teachers and asked if members needed to look at this matter.  It was notes that the current arrangements for membership of Council were set down in legislation.  **5**. **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair of PRRC PRRC/20/14/01**  This item was deferred owing to the non-attendance of a number of members.  Terms of Reference  The SEO took members through this paper and said that this Committee does a significant amount of work for the Council and has a wide remit. He added that he thought the Terms of Reference reflected that.  The Chair added that in the past this Committee was the largest of the 4.  MLW enquired if there was the possibility of having shadow members who could step in in cases of absence.  The SEO advised that now the new Minister is in place there could be more work e.g. forthcoming consultations and indicated that the PRRC previously had open meetings when needed.  The CEO said he would monitor attendance over the next cycle and the matter will be included in the Governance Framework. He also highlighted the inclusion of the Council’s effectiveness review and Communication and Confidentiality.  The CEO indicated that he needed to leave the meeting at 1.30 so item 10 was brought forward for discussion.  **Proposed by LM, seconded by JM.**  **10. Corporate Plan and Business Plan PRRC/20/14/06**  The CEO took members through the plan advising that it will need Departmental approval.  He indicated that over the period Oct 18 – June 19 he had worked with the Council (via Council meetings) on the development of a Corporate Plan. At the time of his appointment the Council did not have a Corporate Plan in place a point noted by both the internal and external auditors as an outstanding recommendation and a key recommendation from the RSM review of GTCNI in 2017. He stressed that it is a key role/purpose of the Council to set the strategic direction of the organisation and develop the Corporate Plan.  He asked members to consider this plan by way of knowledge of the organisation and importantly the underlying strategy and objectives in terms of relevance. It is important for Council to determine if this plan remains a valid framework for the current new Council and if not then in what manner should it change. A fuller discussion on the Corporate Plan will take place at the Council meeting in March.  The CEO explained the flat-lining income and yearly increasing costs, highlighting future costs for regulation.  The CEO then moved on to highlight the objectives and how they may be achieved and explained the future investment in the website.  Members put forward a series of amendments to the objectives and the Chair added that if there were any more detailed suggestions to forward them on.  The CEO said that regarding page 11 that the underlying business strategy is most important and highlighted the assumption of income trend, advising that no other income is brought in. He discussed the costs for the forthcoming year and said that the Council needs to think strategically about income.  The Chair asked if the Corporate Plan needs to be agreed with the Department and enquired if we matched all the criteria included in the MSFM.  AC indicated that it did and that the Corporate Plan will go to the DE Governance Team and that the Minister is working on the DE Business Plan at present.  The CEO asked for feedback before going to Council and advised that at the next round of meetings a sub-committee could be set up to deal with income. He asked members if they were content that this is to be our strategy and where we want to go. e  The CEO discussed the Q3 Monitoring plan which had been sent to DE and highlighted the absence levels of staff.  The Chair enquired about the position of VES and the CEO said this would be discussed at HRC. The Chair then enquired about the business case and the CEO advised he was working on this with HTG. The Chair asked about consultation with staff and the CEO said that once Council has approved this then consultation will start. He added that we needed to get VES approved and a paper to go to the Department.  The Chair advised that a business case was needed for VES and that the Department make the decisions and that if there is no business case VES does not go through.  AC advised members that GTCNI is in Special Measures and that a business case is needed and advised that there may be some timing issues.  **9. Regulation Update PRRC/20/14/05**  The CEO provided members with the background of this paper advising that in January 2019 it was felt that a solution had been found and Council agreed the adoption of a revised set of Conduct Rules. One of the first tasks to progress was to secure additional legal support to conduct investigations and conduct hearings. When appointed, this team (2 Solicitors and Counsel) as part of their familiarization reviewed our Conduct Rules and processes. Counsel raised significant concerns about the legal basis of our approach and the sanction available to us under present legislation. They highlighted significant weaknesses in the legal framework. It was their recommendation that changes should be made to the legislation. These matters were drawn to the attention of the Permanent Secretary in May 2019.  He advised that presently, we are not taking regulation forward and despite raising the matter with DE officials at regular intervals, no follow-up meeting to discuss/agree a way forward has taken place. The CEO has recently written formally to the Permanent Secretary stressing urgency in this matter.  The CEO highlighted the current regulation caseload and the SEO advised that there were gaps in the legislation.  The Chair highlighted that we have 61 cases at present and the CEO explained how new referrals are being dealt with.  The Chair suggested that the Permanent Secretary confer with other agencies and chart a way forward.  AC advised that they had asked DSO for a timeline and the legislative process lies with the Department. An interim solution is needed and clear advice if there are any safeguarding risks.  Members discussed and said that a way forward was needed.  The Chair enquired how the review was going and the CEO said that the officers are only able to adopt a ‘housekeeping’ approach until there is more legal clarity. The Chair enquired when this would be done and the CEO said hopefully before the end of February.  **6. The Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programmes in NI**  **PRRC/20/14/02**  The SEO took members through this paper adding that the accreditation sub-committee will be drawn from Council this year and highlighted the criteria. He advised that the timeline and processes would be agreed with the ETI.  Members discussed amendments to the wording of the criteria.  **7. Membership Leadership Competences Advisory Group and TOR’s**  **PRRC/20/14/03**  The SEO advised that the Leadership Competence Advisory Group had met on 7 occasions and the writing group had met on several occasions and that this was at a critical stage. However some of the members on these groups were no longer on Council.  The Chair enquired how long this was expected to run and the SEO advised that possibly one more meeting.  Members discussed writing to Council members to put their names forward and suggested ‘volunteers’ on group.  The SEO said that all had to meet the criteria. He asked members if it was permissible with the current members. Members agreed.  The SEO asked members about an amendment to the Terms of Reference on Page 4. Members were content.  **8. The draft Leadership Lens and Leadership Competences**  **PRRC/20/14/04**  The SEO said that this work was given a good reception at the Oversight Group. He thanked the group members for their hard work and useful contributions and said that this paper would be taken to Council.  JM added that she felt that soft skills were missing from the diagram for example pastoral skills.  The SEO said the paper would stimulate discussion.  13:15 – The CEO left the meeting.  13:20 – The Chair and MLW left the meeting.  **11. Registration Overview Presentation**  The SEO gave the remaining members a short presentation on the work of the Registration Team.  JM enquired about gaining EU recognition and the SEO advised that there was an EU Directive to recognise people qualified in their own country.  **12. Pramerica Spirit of Community Oral Update**  Papers provided for information  **13. Any Other Business**  None.  **14. Date of next meeting**  15 June 2020  Signed …………………………………….. Dated ……………………………. | Action  Chair |