

**Minutes of the 62nd meeting of the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland.
Tuesday 20 March 2018 – Corrs Corner Hotel, Newtownabbey**

Present: David Canning (Chair), Paul O’Doherty, Raymond Beggs, Clive Bowles, Paul Boyle, Joanne Burns, Malachy Crudden, Monica Culbert, Gillian Dunlop, Paul Fitzpatrick, Sheila Fleming, Grainne McAleer, Carmel McCartan, Eamonn McDowell, Maria Mullally, Catriona Mullan, Brendan Morgan, Susan Parlour, Rosemary Rainey, Clíodhna Scott-Wills, Mary-Lou Winchborne.

In attendance: Anne Dickson, Gerry Devlin, Majella Matthews, Ned Cohen, Debra Castles, Lesley Dickson, Sima Gondhia, Tracey McCavigan (Head of Internal Audit, – Item 16).

Apologies: Áine Andrews, Delma Boggs, David Cargo, Chris Murdock, Brian McGrath, Martin Hagan, Gordon White, Paddy McAllister (Industrial Action), Siobhan McElhinney (Industrial Action)

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and recorded apologies. He thanked the Committees for their work in preparation for the Council meeting and also the panel who are dealing with the appointment of the new Registrar. He added his thanks to the Vice-Chair who had stepped in to attend engagements in his place.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest. Members were informed that they may wish to step out at particular agenda items and could put forward their declarations of interest at that time.

3. Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday 12 December 2017 (GTC/17/Min61)

The Minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting of 12 December 2017.

Proposed: RR

Seconded: PF

4. Matters Arising

The Chair advised that most of these would come under the main agenda.

He informed members that under Item 7 – Charity Commission Decision, a letter had been sent to the Department and we are awaiting feedback.

Under Item 8 - 2016-17 Draft Audited Annual Report and Accounts, the Chair advised that these had now been published.

Under Item 10 - the MSFM, the Chair informed members that one amendment had been agreed with the Department and the document was now with the Department of Finance.

5. 2018/19 Business Plan

(GTC/18/62/01)

The ICO spoke to this paper advising that Members will have already had an opportunity to review and scrutinize the draft Business Plan 2018/19 which was presented to each of the Committees over the February/March cycle of meetings and to staff on 1 March.

Members were advised that the Business Plan covers education policy with an emphasis on the Council's interface with DE's 'Learning Leaders' strategy, the necessity for the annual registration year to proceed as per current statutory responsibilities, the continuation of work to ensure that the Council fulfil its regulatory responsibilities and the important need to ensure continuing compliance with the Council's Governance framework and MSFM.

The ICO indicated that a new column had been included based on feedback from the Committees to identify the lead committee for each Commitment / Action. Progress reports on achievement of the relevant Key Success Indicators for each item will be reported to Committees, with the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee keeping a watching brief.

Members were advised that the Business Plan must be approved by both the Council and the Department of Education. Subject to these approvals it will be published on the Council's website.

The ICO thanked members on their feedback on the Corporate Plan adding that officers have held a series of workshops with each of the Committees over the recent cycle of meetings to support engagement with members and act as a discussion forum for the development of the Corporate Plan for 2018-21. The presentation was also made to staff for their input and as part of a transitional approach to support organisational transformation. Both members and staff had been invited to provide further feedback/ideas for consideration and inclusion in future drafts of the Corporate Plan. Members have agreed that it is appropriate that the Corporate Plan is taken forward by the new Registrar but that in the meantime officers should continue to shape the draft Plan to include feedback as appropriate from members, staff and DE.

In due course, the draft Corporate Plan will be subject to a proportionate consultation process. Thereafter, it will be returned to Council and DE for overall approval.

Members were asked to approve the business plan 2018/19 and to note progress in the development of a Corporate Plan for 2018/21.

Proposed: RR

Seconded: CB

6. Minutes of the Policy, Registration and Regulation Committee

The SEO took members through the draft minutes of the PRRC meeting held on 15th February and confirmed that copies of *Termtalk* had been distributed this week.

7. Update on Regulation

(GTC/18/62/02)

It was voted to take this paper '*In Committee*'

Draft Minutes will be tabled at the next Council meeting.

Proposed: RR

Seconded: CB

Council moved '*Out of Committee*'

8. Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee

CB took members through the draft minutes of the F&GP Committee held on 26th February highlighting expenditure projections and the appointment of new auditors. He also advised that the Finance Manual had been reviewed by officers and approved by the committee; the Committee had discussed the proposals for charging for registrations from outside NI and asked officers to undertake further work.

9. Draft Communications Framework 2018-21

(GTC/18/62/03)

The ICO advised that the recent DE Review recommended the development of a communications policy for engaging with the teaching profession and introduced the Communications officer Debra Castles who presented the paper, which has already been considered by the F&GP Committee.

D Castles advised that the purpose of this paper is to facilitate discussion and agreement on the Communications Framework 2018 – 2021 and to build on the successes of the past.

She indicated that the draft Communications Framework is focussed on Stakeholder engagement, Strategic communications, Media and Digital campaign and Internal communications

Successful implementation of the framework will result in greater reach in GTCNI's communication activity; better engagement with stakeholders (both increased breadth and depth); increased understanding about GTCNI's role and remit; enhancing GTCNI's credibility and reputation; more effective working of both Council members and staff; and achievement of organisational objectives

Mrs Castles highlighted the key elements including procurement of new website and greater use of social media and the re-introduction of *Termtalk*; consultation and engagement around the re-publication of the 27 competences and the Council's role in Learning Leaders, creating important opportunities to develop new approaches to engagement with key stakeholders; and the development of an Ambassador programme to give Council members the information to promote the work of GTCNI and the teaching profession.

Members discussed further activities, suggesting attendance at Union Conferences and visits to universities.

MLW added that this was a comprehensive piece of work and asked if it is incremental.

Members discussed the cost and content of *Termtalk*. R Beggs raised the issue of distribution of the magazine and compliance with data protection in terms of sending it to teachers' home addresses. GD advised that she was glad to see *Termtalk* back again and that in her school hard copies were kept in the staff rooms and the information provided was used by teachers.

The ICO committed to ensuring that distribution of the magazine is GDPR compliant. The SEO added that officers regard *Termtalk* as a serious professional magazine for a professional audience.

The Chair asked if Council was content to move forward.

Proposed: RR
Seconded: CMcC

10. GTCNI Equality Scheme and Disability Action Plan (GTC/18/62/04)

The ICO updated members about the draft GTCNI Equality Scheme and Disability Action Plan (DAP) in advance of their submission for approval to the Equality Commission.

She advised that all public bodies are required to publish such documentation and that the drafts had been considered Council in December 2016. The EO advised that the documentation had been amended based on the feedback from the consultation exercise which took place in mid-2017, and subject to Council's approval, would now be formally provided to the Equality Commission.

Proposed: RR
Seconded: CMcC

11. Preparations for General Data Protection Regulations (GTC/18/62/05)

The ICO took members through this paper advising that the Council had to be GDPR compliant by 25 May and that the Council staff are focussed on this issue at present. She advised that an action plan had been prepared and that the Council's Information Management arrangements, including GDPR readiness, would be subject to Internal Audit in coming weeks.

Members acknowledged the importance of GDPR preparation and noted the Action Plan.

Monica Culbert left the meeting at 11.45am

12. Minutes of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

RR took members through the minutes of the ARA Committee held on 6th March informing members that the Accounts have been laid and no new DACs have been awarded. She updated members on the presentation from the Council's new internal auditors and on the

committee's discussion on risk management. A discussion had taken place on outstanding audit recommendations and RR advised that all completed recommendations are to be removed in the next update.

13. Minutes of the Human Resources Committee

PF took members through the minutes of the HR Committee meeting held on 23 February. He said the sickness absence report and workforce management system had been discussed along with NIPSA Recognition and the Corporate Plan.

14. Introduction of Recognition & Procedural Agreement and Facilities Agreement with NIPSA (GTC/18/62/06)

EO updated Council members about progress in agreeing the Recognition and Procedural Agreement and the Facilities Agreement with NIPSA in relation to the GTCNI workforce.

He advised that the Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA) has formally sought recognition as the trade union representing GTCNI staff by virtue of the number of staff holding NIPSA membership. Following initial discussion with NIPSA and advice from the GTCNI HR providers (ThinkPeople) and DE, draft Recognition and Procedural Agreement and the Facilities Agreement were developed and approved by Council in December 2016.

Members were advised that GTCNI recognise that formalising arrangements to NIPSA will be an important precursor to any future discussions about staff restructuring. The draft Recognition and Procedural Agreement and the Facilities Agreement were brought to the HRC on 23 February (HRC/18/07/05) and recommended for approval by Council.

Members were asked to consider and approve.

Proposed: RR
Seconded: EMcD

15. Staffing Update

It was proposed that this item be held '*In Committee*'.
Draft Minutes will be tabled on 18 June for consideration and approval.

Proposed: CSW
Seconded: SP

16. Correspondence from Mrs Elizabeth Lewis (In committee, observed by Head of Internal Audit)

This item was also held '*In Committee*'.
Draft Minutes will be tabled on 18 June for consideration and approval.

17. AOB

None.

18. Date of next meeting

Monday 18 June 2018

Signed..... **Dated**