

GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL FOR WALES
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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TWENTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE GENERAL
TEACHING COUNCIL FOR WALES**

DATE: 16TH JANUARY 2006

LOCATION: THE HILL EDUCATION AND CONFERENCE CENTRE, ABERGAVENNY.

Present:

Mal Davies (Chair)	Gareth Jones
Jacque Turnbull (Deputy Chair)	Goronwy Jones
Frank Bonello	Nichola Jones
Jean Campion	Valerie Merriman
Tim Cox	Suzanne Nantcurvis
Elwyn Davies	Rosemond Nelson
Sheila Drayton	Gareth Roberts
Michael Edwards	Jane Setchfield
Anthony Hughes	Jacky Tonge
Angela Jardine	Gwen Williams
Sue Jenkins	Peter Williams

Apologies:

Ron Carrotte, Ian Guy, Richard Parry Jones.

Officers:

Gary Brace	Chief Executive
Hayden Llewellyn	Deputy Chief Executive (Teachers' Qualifications, Registration and Professional Standards)
Julia Evans	Deputy Chief Executive (Finance, Personnel and Corporate Services)
Karen Evans	Policy and Planning Manager
Jo Harris	Corporate Support Officer

Welcome and Preliminaries

The Chairman welcomed members to the twenty-second meeting of the Council and welcomed the persons observing in the public gallery. The Chairman also welcomed Gavin Scott, GTC Scotland (Director of Finance and Administration) as an observer and Jo Harris, Corporate Support Officer, to her first Council meeting.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Draft minutes of the Council meeting held 18th October 2005

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting were confirmed as a correct record, subject to one query and two typographical errors.
- 2.2 Minute 7.3: A member questioned whether the minute which referred to elected members needing to speak for all teachers in their electoral category, reflected the debate at the time. The Chair clarified that the minute was correct.
- 2.3 Minute 9.4: An amendment was needed to correct the word 'Awards' which had been misspelt.
- 2.4 Minute 10.4: The removal of the word 'and' was agreed from the first line of this minute to correct the grammar.

Matters arising:

- 2.5 Minute 7.6: GTCW Constitution Regulations: The Chair drew the Council's attention to the Minister's wish to consult further on issues raised as a result of the consultation on the GTCW's constitution and that this was likely to be timetabled for the summer of 2006.
- 2.6 Minute 8.4: CPD Update: The Chair clarified that the questionnaire returns which had been referred to were evaluations and were completed *after* teachers had completed their funded activity.
- 2.7 Minute 9.3 Standards Development Group: The Chair informed the Council that members and reserves for this group had now been finalised and there had been achieved a balance of representation geographically, linguistically, by gender and phase/role. Members were advised that, once the responses to the invitation had been received, they would be reported to Council.

3. To receive notification of any issues which members wish to raise in respect of the 'Information' Agenda items (16 to 19)

- 3.1 One member notified a question for agenda item eighteen regarding the report from Gareth Roberts which detailed his attendance at the Liaison Group on Research in Education and Training. This was presented later as one of the reports in the 'Reports from Council representatives on external groups'.

4. Draft minutes of the Executive Committee meeting 1st December 2005

- 4.1 The Chief Executive briefly introduced the minutes, stating that all issues would be covered by the agenda.
- 4.2 The unconfirmed minutes were noted.
- 4.3 There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5. Draft minutes of the Registration Committee meeting 1st December 2005.

- 5.1 Frank Bonello, Chair of the committee, presented the minutes and stated that all items would be covered in the agenda.
- 5.2 The Council Chair made members aware that, following the decision made during the previous Council meeting in October 2005, the name of a teacher due to appear before a Professional Conduct Committee was subsequently provided to the press when requested. Further examples would be monitored and reported back to Council accordingly.
- 5.3 The unconfirmed minutes were noted.
- 5.4 There were no matters arising from the draft minutes.

6. Draft minutes of the Policy Committee meeting 8th December 2005.

- 6.1 The Chief Executive presented the minutes, stating that all issues for discussion would be covered by the agenda.
- 6.2 The unconfirmed minutes were noted.

Matters arising:

- 6.3 A member questioned whether the proposed application to The Privy Council for Chartered Status was likely to receive support from the Minister. Gary Brace responded that the details would be covered in agenda item nine but added that this was the general impression given by the Minister at the meeting in August following submission of the advice.

7. Draft minutes of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee meeting 8th December 2005.

- 7.1 The Committee Chairperson, Mike Edwards, reported on these minutes, drawing attention to the draft Whistle-Blowing policy which had been presented at the Committee meeting. This would be reported to Council in due course. He added that both he and Jacky Tonge were currently points of contact for staff wishing to raise any concerns.
- 7.2 The unconfirmed minutes were noted.
- 7.3 There were no matters arising from the draft minutes.

8. Professional Development Funding programme update (including Group Bursary) (GTCW 01/06)

- 8.1 Hayden Llewellyn, Deputy Chief Executive, provided this update in two parts and asked members to note both the progress in administering the 2005-06 funding programme and the arrangements for the 2006-07 programme which would include the new 'pilot' Group Bursary category. The Council were asked to receive the information for information and were invited to raise questions.

- 8.2 **Funding programme 2005-06.** Hayden Llewellyn firstly provided an update on the current allocation of funding to teachers which was reported at £1,370,020 as at 15th December 2005 and went on to inform members that over-allocation of funds would take place as in previous years.
- 8.2 **Funding programme 2006-07 and Group Bursary.** Members were reminded that sums of £2.5 million and £3 million have been allocated to the Council by the Assembly for the 2006-07 and 2007-08 funding years respectively. In addition, the recently agreed Assembly budget for 2008-09 included a figure of £3 million for the CPD Funding Programme. Members were advised that copies of the Information booklets and application forms would be issued to all eligible teachers in early March 2006 along with the Group Bursary booklet.
- 8.3 A member enquired about where in Table C (Annex A) peripatetic teachers working in more than one LEA were recorded. Hayden Llewellyn responded that teachers in this scenario were recorded in the category 'unattached to LEA'.
- 8.4 Members queried the period of time the analysis covered. The arrangements to deal with any lack of response from LEAs and clarification on the activities being undertaken in North Wales. It was reported that analysis had been taken over 4 years to ensure a thorough coverage; communication with teachers would be covered by GTCW's planned marketing and that staff were proactive with particular LEAs and schools, including those in the north, to encourage CPD applications.
- 8.5 A typographical error, 'Anti-Bully System', was noted on page one of Annex C which needed correction.
- 8.6 Members questioned if provision had been made for a potential scenario where, a teacher who made an application for a Group Bursary which had been granted, were to subsequently leave the school and what would happen to the funds. Would they be attached to the person or the project itself? It was generally felt that the funds should be allocated to the project, however this would be affected if it was the actual project leader who left. Hayden Llewellyn responded that these issues would be covered in detail in the Group Bursary booklet.
- 9. Professional Development Framework Task Group – Strand Two 'Professional recognition and accreditation' draft consultation. (GTCW 02/06)**
- 9.1 The Chief Executive presented this paper, drawing attention to the key aspects which required discussion, namely to agree the document; including confirming whether to move to one 'Chartered Teacher' milestone and the appropriate terminology to describe 'classroom teacher'; and to discuss the application for Chartered status.
- 9.2 The Task Group had developed the document over a period of six months to the resulting fourth draft, taking on board the first consultation and initial advice given to the Minister in the summer of 2005.
- 9.3 A report was also made on the GTCW's meeting with The Privy Council officials which took place in October 2005 which had been very positive. Members had been concerned at the previous Council meeting that the Council's independence could be undermined by taking on Chartered status, however, this concern was allayed as officials confirmed that the Council's status was already laid down in statute which took precedence.

- 9.4 A question raised earlier in the session by a member was answered at this point, confirming that the Minister had indicated her support for the award of Chartered Teacher status as it was an already understood means of professional recognition.
- 9.5 One member questioned the costs involved for the Council itself and individual teachers to have Chartered status. It was reported that there would be only the legal costs involved in Council making the application. This process would take between one and two years.
- 9.6 The same member raised the implications of a scenario where a Chartered Teacher might be subsequently investigated for professional conduct and whether The Privy Council had any expectations for the Teaching Council to make arrangements to remove Chartered status from such teachers if allegations of misconduct were upheld. Officers' initial thoughts were that the status of Chartered Teacher would be retained in these circumstances. Clarification was also given that, once awarded, there was no requirement by The Privy Council for the awarding body, i.e. The General Teaching Council of Wales, to have any removal system in place.
- 9.7 Members discussed the required period of teaching time which would make a teacher eligible to apply and, in particular, how this would affect teachers who worked part-time or had had a break in their service, for example, for maternity leave. Officers agreed that the wording of point three of paragraph eighty would be amended accordingly. The issue of eligibility would be opened up in the consultation process to enable a full discussion with the profession.
- 9.8 Members welcomed the application for the Council to become a Chartered body and it was agreed that officers should proceed with the process of making a submission to the Privy Council.
- 9.9 Members went on to discuss the fourth draft of the Professional Development Framework Strand Two document
- 9.10 One member wished to note formally that the opportunity to comment on the draft document, which had been sent to members immediately prior to the Christmas holidays, had resulted in him not being able to make his contribution by the deadline provided. It was agreed that there had been a short space of time to prepare the document ready for this Council meeting due to the timing of the Policy Committee on 8 December and the subsequent amendments which were needed but the Framework Consultation document was a mature 4th draft which had been considered by Task Group and Policy Committee on a number of occasions. The member asked for an assurance that consultations would not take place in holiday periods. The Chief Executive stated that this assurance could not be given as the expanding work of the Council needed to continue throughout the year. Members were generally content that due to the additional time restraints incurred following the Assembly's own tight timescales, there was sometimes need for such documents to be despatched during or preceding school holidays and in some cases this had enabled them to make their comments more speedily.
- 9.11 Members were content with the single milestone of 'Chartered Teacher' and agreed this should be adopted throughout the document.
- 9.12 A discussion took place regarding the most appropriate term to use to convey 'Classroom Teacher'. Discussions centred on the need to take the opportunity to

select a more forward-looking term; the avoidance of having too many names; the possible use of 'practice' and 'practitioner'; concerns that the titles of 'Middle Leader' and 'Classroom Teacher' might appear to be of different levels of importance. Members were concerned to exercise caution so as not to alienate or exclude any teachers who had valuable contributions to make, even though they might not be or want to be 'Middle Leaders'. Members concurred that careful consideration had been given throughout the Task Group and Policy Committee discussions and that a term that reflected 'classroom practice' rather than the post held might be preferable.

- 9.11 The Council agreed the consultation version of the document and looked forward to the results of the consultation exercise which would be completed by April 2006.

10. Funding of Induction and EPD progress report. (GTCW 03/06)

- 10.1 The Chief Executive presented this paper which outlined the progress made so far by officers in establishing the new function of the funding of Induction and Early Professional Development following an invitation from the Assembly. It was pointed out that agreement had been given in principle by the Council at the previous Council meeting (minute 10.4) for the Council to take on the new role of administering this funding, and reported on the sound progress made in the early stages. Members were invited to note the report and to raise any questions.
- 10.2 A meeting with a small group of headteachers, deputies and bursars had recently taken place to test out the proposed funding arrangements based on the system currently in use. Some useful adjustments to the proposed method had been suggested and would be incorporated. A full consultation would then take place.
- 10.3 Meetings with the Assembly had raised and resolved a number of issues including their request for a 'light touch' approach to be taken by the Council when dealing with quality assurance of EPD; whether there should be a national training system for mentors; and the coverage of administration costs to the Council for the work undertaken. In particular, the timing of when the Council would commence responsibility for the funding task had been carefully discussed and agreed. There would be a 'hand-over' phase from April 2006 when Council would honour commitments of LEAs and subsequently, there would be a full launch of the Council's new responsibility for handling the funding role from September 2006 including advanced despatch of appropriate communications to all involved.
- 10.4 Members welcomed the new role for the Council as some teachers' knowledge about the availability of funding for EPD is 'patchy' and there was a need to raise awareness in all areas.
- 10.5 A discussion took place where members raised questions including the Council's request to the Assembly for information on how LEAs currently distribute the funds allocated per teacher; if there would be any impact on LEAs who had set out long term, i.e. three year, financial plans; to whom would a dissatisfied teacher who had completed an EPD programme complain; and if there was any outstanding legal advice to be sought. In each case the Chief Executive responded, making members aware that Assembly officials would provide such information as soon as they received it from the LEAs; no detrimental impact was foreseen; any dissatisfied teachers should refer to their school headteacher and mentor. Clarification was also given that all legal advice had been sought and reported on at the last Council meeting.
- 10.6 Members were content that they were satisfied with the report and the work undertaken to date.

11. The Teaching Profession of the Future. (GTCW 04/06)

- 11.1 Karen Evans, Policy and Planning Manager, presented the proposed first draft document and invited members to decide whether they agreed that the document should be taken forward as a stimulus for further debate within the teaching profession.
- 11.2 The Council had proposed to develop a paper on 'The Teaching Profession of the Future' in response to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee's review on the 'School of the Future'. Consultation had taken place within the profession and was completed in October 2005, resulting in 50 responses which were from a broad and diverse range of individuals and organisations. The responses had been discussed by the Policy Committee in December 2005 and discussion invited from members on the way forward.
- 11.3 Members recognised the value of the exercise in terms of raising awareness and establishing the emerging themes but felt there was no further need to seek broad views. The feelings of teachers which had emerged were wide ranging and included the concerns about a 'blame culture'; an initiative overload; a need to revive optimism within the profession and the need to gain politicians support to bring teachers through this difficult time. A question was raised whether those outside the teaching profession, such as parent teacher organisations, should be involved but it was concluded that the Council's aim was to debate the 'Teaching Profession of the Future' rather than 'The School of the Future'.
- 11.4 Members noted the work which officers had put into this worthwhile exercise and that the important issues raised should be enabled to develop further but in a purposeful manner.
- 11.5 It was further suggested that the topic could be placed on the Council's website at anytime when further debate or views were required. This suggestion was noted.
- 11.6 The Council remitted the document to the Policy Committee to finalise it with a view to presenting it to the Assembly . The Committee was also remitted to decide how it could be taken forward in a purposeful manner.

12. The Professional Code for Teachers/Professionalism in Practice (GTCW 05/06)

- 12.1 Hayden Llewellyn presented this paper and invited members to consider approving two documents, namely, a revised version of The Professional Code for Teachers and a final version of the information leaflet 'Professionalism in Practice'.

The Professional Code for Teachers:

- 12.2 As the initial Professional Code for Teachers was due for its first review after three years, Council had debated and agreed in January 2005 that, whilst the code should remain aspirational, it would consult with the teaching profession to ensure that the Code continued to meet the needs of the profession and the public.
- 12.3 Members welcomed the amendment of the title of the Code to 'Statement of Professional Values and Practice' which had been changed to bring the document in line with the equivalent produced by GTC England and GTC Northern Ireland.

- 12.4 Members commented that the redrafted document was very good and that, in particular, 'Professionalism in Practice – A good practice guide', was very helpful.
- 12.5 One member felt that there had been a misnaming of the original document as a 'code' when it was aspirational. She nevertheless had a feeling of discomfort by the absence of a statement of the minimum standards required of a teacher which other professional bodies include. Some members felt that because the Council had not produced a list of minimum standards, that it was misleading to imply that the profession did not have any at all. The Chair concluded that a fresh debate on this issue was needed in the future.
- 12.6 Members debated the wording of the Equal Opportunities phrasing in paragraph three of Annex B. Concerns were raised specifically regarding the use of the term 'regardless of' which might be non-inclusive or derogatory. In addition, caution was suggested when translating the equivalent wording in Welsh which could also lead to difficulties. Members recognised the need to get this particular issue absolutely right and it was agreed that advice would be sought from The Equal Opportunities Commission.
- 12.7 A typographical error was noted in Annex C which required amendment.
- 12.8 Subject to amendments to the wording and typographical error, the Council approved the document.

Professionalism in Practice:

- 12.9 Prior to the meeting, both the Registration Committee and Council had considered this document during 2005 and had made requests for specific amendments. These had been actioned by officers and the document presented for final approval.
- 12.10 Members indicated that a further change to paragraph seven on page two would be needed. Officers agreed that the cross reference to "Teachers make effective use of the information they gather" would be reconsidered or removed.
- 12.11 Subject to the above amendment, the Council agreed the document and gave its approval for it to be taken forward by Council officers for publication.

13. Draft Corporate Plan (GTCW 06/06)

- 13.1 The Policy and Planning Manager introduced this paper, summarising the changes already made, and invited members to give their comments and suggested amendments before resubmission to the Executive Committee. In addition, the Operational Plan 2006-07 would be built directly out of the Corporate Plan and an agreement to remit the development and approval of the Operational Plan to the Executive Committee was also sought.
- 13.2 Finalisation of both plans will take place in March 2006 and each will be shared with the Welsh Assembly Government for information by 31 March 2006.
- 13.3 The Council welcomed the document and were content with it subject to a few amendments.
- 13.4 The title of section 1.4 on page fourteen would need to be amended following the change to the 'Professional Code for Teachers'.
- 13.5 A member suggested that the list of development work undertaken by the Council on page sixteen could be reordered to reflect the importance of the 'Teaching Profession

of the Future' policy work. It was agreed some changes would be made whilst retaining the level of importance of other development works such as professional development.

- 13.6 An amendment was required on paragraph five of page eighteen following the changes agreed during the session to the professional milestone.
- 13.7 The Council agreed that the Corporate Plan 2006-09 should be passed to the Executive Committee once the above amendments had been made and that the Operational Plan 2006-07 should also be delegated to the Executive Committee for development and approval. As detailed in the paper, members would have opportunity to make postal comments on the Operational Plan at a later date.

14. Registration Fee 2006-07 (GTCW 07/06)

- 14.1 Julia Evans, Deputy Chief Executive (Finance, Personnel and Corporate Services) introduced this paper, inviting members to discuss and reach an agreement on the proposed registration fee for 2006-07 of £32, unchanged for last three years. The Indicative budget forecast for 2006-07 shown at Annex A indicated the calculation of that fee, based on a planned deficit for the year of £8,209.
- 14.2 The process for making a recommendation for the fee started in October 2005 with the checking of data held by the Council to ensure that the fee deduction was collected only from serving full-time and part-time teachers in maintained schools which also enabled officers to establish an accurate number of paying teachers. It was reported that the proposed £32 fee for 2006-07 had been calculated on a baseline figure of 36,500 registered teachers, an increase on the baseline of 35,000 teachers, used previously.
- 14.3 Taken with forecast expenditure for the year, this then enabled the Council to plan its budgets for the following years with the aim of raising sufficient income to cover the proposed expenditure for the year. In particular attention was drawn to an upward-only rent review, increasing the office rental costs for the Council and also the imminent job evaluation exercise which might also result in an increase in staff costs. The budget also includes an annual contribution to the election reserve.
- 14.4 Members were informed that the Council was still awaiting a report from GTC England on their fee decision for the registration year 2006-07 as their Council meeting was not due to take place until 28th January 2006.
- 14.5 A member queried the decrease in total overheads incurred by the Council between the financial years forecast outturn for 2005-06 and the planned figure for 2006-07. It was reported that this would be due to some over-budgeting which had taken place in 2005-6 which would not be repeated in the following financial term. There was also a planned decrease in the budget for consultancy costs (with a small increase in rent and venue hire) which accounted for the difference. The amount set aside for disciplinary cases was also queried. Clarification was given that the number of cases in 2005-06 were thought by officers to be unusually high and that fewer, only four or five cases, were expected for the following year.
- 14.6 Council members were content with the proposed unchanged £32 fee for 2006-07 and approved this recommendation.

15. International Conference of Teaching Councils (GTCW 08/06)

- 15.1 The Chief Executive reported on this paper which outlined progress made since the first international conference of Teaching Councils which had been held in Edinburgh in June 2005. Members were asked to give their impressions on the Edinburgh Declaration and to discuss the invitation which had been made to the Council to attend the second conference which was due to take place in March 2006 in Melbourne, Australia. The Council was also approached to consider discussing a policy on how future invitations should be handled and particular principles applied.
- 15.2 The Edinburgh Declaration established a set of goals which commits Teaching Councils to work together to develop, promote and implement protocols relating to common areas of activity. The goals aimed to share mutually beneficial practices; support mutual recognition of programmes and promote, internationally, the high standards and shared values of the teaching profession in the interests of the public.
- 15.3 Members were advised that Mal Davies and Gary Brace had signed the document in their capacity as Chairperson and Chief Executive respectively. Members concurred they were content with the signing of the document and the aspiration to work with Teaching Councils on an international basis in support of the goals.
- 15.4 The Chief Executive stated that importance of sharing and discussing the practices undertaken by councils in the interests of promoting the highest standards within the profession on an international basis was clearly evident in view of the current news stories in the UK. He went on to report that his Chairing of the Five Nations Mutual Recognition Sub Group further facilitated the UK and Republic of Ireland Councils in working together to understand each others' teaching qualifications and was relevant when granting teachers Qualified Teacher Status in Wales.
- 15.5 Members then debated two issues concurrently, namely the question of whether to accept the invitation to the Second International Conference in Melbourne and secondly, the principles which would need to be covered in order to establish a policy for future referral. Questions were raised about the content of the meeting; the expected costs; which members of Council would attend; whether there were any guidelines from the Civil Service which could be drawn upon or policies from other GTCs and if attendance on this occasion would be seen as a precedent. Gavin Scott, Finance and Administration Director for GTC Scotland, was present as an observer and was able to report that GTC Scotland had incurred the costs for hosting the event and for payment of the venue costs, however, GTC Scotland had not covered the costs of attendees' travel and accommodation. Some members were concerned about the sensitivity of the issue to teachers, particularly if there was the possibility that the registration fee might increase in the next financial year. Whilst one member suggested that 'virtual' attendance via video conferencing might be an option, other members stated they would not wish for Wales to be unrepresented at such an important, cutting edge conference.
- 15.6 After a detailed debate, which included discussion of the possibility of an extraordinary Executive Committee meeting to debate the topic as a matter of urgency, members agreed that a policy would need to be debated first at the next Executive Committee meeting. It was generally felt that this invitation had come 'a little too late' for the Council to be able to form a correct and proper decision on a potentially sensitive issue. An agreement was reached that officers should decline the invitation and following the meeting of the Executive Committee on 2nd March 2006, the draft policy would be brought forward for members to consider at the next Council meeting on 4th May 2006.

16. Any other business.

There was no other business.

18. Reports from Council representatives on external groups (GTCW 10/06)

- 18.1 A member highlighted a recommendation from Gareth Roberts, who reported on his attendance of the Liaison Group on Research in Education and Training, which recommended that Council representation was maintained. This was accepted by the Chair and will be followed up.