GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL FOR WALES
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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH MEETING OF THE GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL FOR WALES

DATE: 7TH FEBRUARY 2007

LOCATION: THE MARRIOTT HOTEL, SWANSEA

Present:

Mal Davies (Chair)	Goronwy Jones
Jacquie Turnbull (Deputy Chair)	Nichola Jones
Frank Bonello	Valerie Merriman
Tim Cox	Suzanne Nantcurvis
Elwyn Davies	Rosemond Nelson
Michael Edwards	Richard Parry Jones.
Ian Guy	Gareth Roberts
Anthony Hughes	Jane Setchfield
Angela Jardine	Jacky Tonge
Sue Jenkins	Gwen Williams
Gareth Jones	Peter Williams

Apologies:
Ron Carrotte, Sheila Drayton and Matt MacIver (General Teaching Council for Scotland)

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

1. Welcome and Preliminaries

1.1 The Chairperson welcomed members to the twenty-sixth meeting of the Council and confirmed the meeting would be conducted bilingually. A welcome was given to observers Paul Brazeau (Elected member for North-Eastern Ontario of the Governing Council of the Ontario College of Teachers),Lisa Dobie (Council Administrator, General Teaching Council for Scotland) and Janet Richard (Head of Finance, General Teaching Council for England) . A further welcome was also offered to the persons observing from the public gallery.

1.2 The Chairperson proceeded to formally note the sad death of Council member, Jean Campion, and went on to advise members that a donation had been made in her memory on behalf of Council members and staff to St David's Foundation Hospice. A moment's silence was then held in Jean's memory.

1.3 The Chairperson then drew members' attention to the *Becoming a Qualified Teacher* packs which had been provided for information and to other publications which were available following the meeting. These comprised the Council's *Disciplinary Procedures and Rules; Suitability Procedures and Rules* and *Teaching Wales – winter edition.*

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 Richard Parry Jones declared an interest in agenda item 12: *Professional Development Framework* in relation to potential providers of the Chartered Teacher pilot. It was agreed that he would withdraw at the appropriate point of the discussion.

2.2 At a later point of the meeting, Gareth Jones declared an interest in agenda item 15: *Professional Standards matters* and agreed to withdraw at the appropriate time.

3. Chairperson's correspondence

3.1 The Chairperson assured members that both letters from Jane Davidson, Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills would be dealt with under agenda items 11 and 12 respectively.

4. Draft minutes of the Council meeting held 17th October 2006

4.1 The minutes of the meeting were confirmed as a correct record.

Matters arising:

4.2 Minute 6.8: Calendar of dates: The Chairperson reported that an extended calendar of meeting dates, which was being moved to the format an academic year, had been approved by the Executive Committee and circulated to members.

4.3 Minute 9.5: Suitability for Registration: Hayden Llewellyn (*Deputy Chief Executive, Teachers' Qualifications, Registration and Professional Standards*) updated members, reporting that legal advice had been sought on the wording of an issue on page 6 of the Council's *Suitability Procedures and Rules* document. An appropriate amendment had been made to ensure clarity as requested by members.

4.4 Minute 9.6: Suitability for Registration: Hayden Llewellyn advised members that legal advice to the Council provided assurance that the outcomes of military courts would not have bearing on the areas covered by the Council's remit.

4.5 Minute 14.3: Disciplinary Procedures and Rules: One member questioned whether guidance had been sought regarding a possible anomaly as noted in the minutes. Hayden Llewellyn (*Deputy Chief Executive, Teachers' Qualifications, Registration and Professional Standards*) responded that this would be followed up shortly and reported to Council.

4.6 Minute 15.5: European perspectives on teaching qualifications: The Chief Executive made members aware that, following the publication of the cross-nation research document which had been commissioned by the UK and Ireland teaching Councils, GTC Scotland had amended a core procedure. Teachers, who had qualified through traditional routes within the UK outside of Scotland, could become registered with the GTCS without further administrative requirements.

4.7 Minute 10.4: Funding of Induction and EPD: A member requested an update on the response from Assembly officials regarding retrospective funding. Gary Brace reported that officials from the Welsh Assembly had indicated that funds would not be made available to schools before teachers' training had taken place.

5. To receive notification of any issues which members wish to raise in respect of the 'Information' Agenda items (21 to 26)

5.1 No notifications were given.

6. Draft minutes of the Executive Committee meeting 4th December 2006

6.1 The Chief Executive introduced these minutes, drawing members' attention to 2 main points which were not covered on the meeting agenda.

6.2 Minute 7.5: The 2007 Annual Lecture: The Chief Executive advised members that an invitation had been issued and a response awaited.

6.3 Minute 7.6: The North Wales event: The Chief Executive also reported that arrangements for discussions with LEA Directors in North Wales were in hand.

6.4 The unconfirmed minutes were noted.

6.5 There were no matters arising.

7. Draft minutes of the Registration Committee meeting 4th December 2006.

7.1 Frank Bonello presented these minutes, explaining that all issues would be covered on the agenda. However, he drew members' attention to minute 4.4: *Professional Standards casework and Freedom of Information*. The minutes had not stated which option was preferred. Members of the Registration Committee had felt that option c, to comply with the spirit of the Freedom of Information Act by publishing more detailed information, was the preferred way forward.

7.2 The unconfirmed minutes were noted.

7.3 There were no matters arising.

8. Draft minutes of the Policy Committee meeting 8th December 2006

8.1 The Chief Executive briefly introduced these minutes, informing members that all issues would be covered on the meeting agenda.

8.2 The unconfirmed minutes were noted.

8.3 There were no matters arising.

9. Draft minutes of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee meeting 13th December 2006

9.1 Jacky Tonge presented these minutes in the absence of Ron Carrotte who had chaired the last meeting. Members were advised that all issues would be covered on the agenda.

9.2 The unconfirmed minutes were noted.

9.3 There were no matters arising

10. Corporate Plan, 2007-10 & Operational Plan, 2007-08 (GTCW 01/07)

10.1 The Chief Executive presented this paper which incorporated the Corporate Plan which outlined the Council's high level objectives for a 3 year period and the Operational Plan which detailed the Council's activities for a 12 month period with targets to be achieved. The finance element for each plan had been tabled. Members were invited to discuss financial issues specifically regarding the Council's registration fee as part of agenda item 11.

10.2 Both documents had been discussed by Council and the Executive Committee previously and, subject to any amendments, members were invited to comment on the plans.

10.3 One member queried the inclusion of *Suitability for Registration* within the contents plan of the Corporate Plan. The Chief Executive clarified that this part of the Council's remit was included within Objective 1.2 which outlined the registration activities.

10.4 The Chairperson moved on to invite members to comment on the Operational Plan. There were no issues raised and members were content with the draft in its final form.

10.5 Julia Evans *(Deputy Chief Executive, Finance, Personnel and Corporate Services)* introduced the finance pages, reminding members that an indicative set of figures in respect of Council activity had last been provided to Council on 13th July 2006 including the costs of the Chartered Teacher pilot. Originally, a deficit followed by a profit had been forecast for the two years, 2007-08 and 2008-09 but subsequently, increases in staff and non-staff costs had now been forecast and a deficit was now foreseen for those years. In addition, an over-spend on the Council's disciplinary costs during 2006-07, would lead to the use of the Disciplinary Reserve. The Deputy Chief Executive went on to explain that the figures presented to members planned for the Disciplinary Reserve to be rebuilt over a three year period including the financial years 2008-09 to 2010-11. Members were made aware that costs for the Chartered Teacher pilot, with the equivalent funding from the Welsh Assembly Government, had been included for 2007-08 and 2008-09 but not for 2009-10 pending the decision for the pilot to be mainstream. In reality, there would be some costs incurred by Council in respect of the Professional Development Framework, including the Chartered Teacher pilot, totalling approximately £25,000 in 2007-08 and 2008-09. Should the Chartered Teacher pilot then become a mainstream programme, the

Council may incur estimated annual expenditure of £150,000 – this figure had not been included in the budget.

10.6 The Chief Executive then invited members to remit the finance statements in the Corporate and Operational Plans to the Executive Committee for agreement in March 2007 ready for implementation at the start of the new financial year. Before then, further work would be undertaken by officers to incorporate members' comments.

10.7 The Chairperson invited members to comment accordingly.

10.8 Issues raised were namely: that enquiries could be sought of other GTCs to establish their increase in disciplinary costs; to consider reducing costs of Professional Standards hearings by bringing the 'event' in-house; to note that the wish to facilitate hearings in both North and South Wales incurred additional costs and that there might be a case for the Minister of Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills to bear in mind the increased costs of the Council in terms of its wish to be flexible and sensitive in its facilitation of the disciplinary process.

10.9 The Chief Executive reminded members of the backlog at DfES following the events of January 2006 which had directly led to the increase in hearings. Hayden Llewellyn (*Deputy Chief Executive, Teachers' Qualifications, Registration and Professional Standards*) provided a comparison to the arrangements in place at GTC England who, in gaining new premises had taken the opportunity to obtain 2 in-house hearing suites and had also appointed a number of in-house presenting officers. These were options which could be considered in the future.

10.10 Another member raised the question of whether the financial calculations had taken in to account the number of surplus places within teaching and that, overall, the number of teachers within Wales continued to fall. Julia Evans *(Deputy Chief Executive, Finance, Personnel and Corporate Services)* reported that the current number of teachers registered with the Council stood at 38,400, the annual budget was still based on an prudent estimate of 36,500 registered teachers.

10.11 An issue regarding registration fees versus the Council's core activities arose which might give the appearance that funding from the Welsh Assembly Government might be used as a subsidy to the Council's work. The Chief Executive assured members that only the appropriate percentage of overhead costs, such as electricity and rent, were charged to the Assembly in relation to the grant funded work undertaken by the Council. In specific reference to any future mainstreaming of the Chartered Teacher programme, the Council had always assumed that it would be funding the administration of the scheme.

11. Registration fee, 2007-08 (GTCW 02/07)

11.1 In presenting this paper, the Chief Executive referred members to the letter dated 12th January 2007 from the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills. Consideration was to be given to the issues arising from the Minister's letter and the ending of a reciprocal arrangement with GTC England which made provision for teachers who might teach in both England and Wales.

11.2 With regards to the first issue, members were reminded that Council had agreed an indicative registration fee for 2008-09 of £36 in July 2006 and this had been confirmed by the Executive Committee in December. The Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills had not approved the Council's request to set the fee at £36 but had stated that she would approve £33 but added that the Welsh Assembly

Government would look to arrange additional funding to support the Chartered Teacher pilot programme.

11.3 The Chief Executive commented that the Minister's letter raised fundamental questions about the Council's financial independence and therefore the potential for Assembly influence. A request to increase the level of fee reimbursement from the STRB had been raised by the current and previous Council Chairpersons, but it had remained at a level which, in practice, appeared to tie the GTCW fee to that set by GTC England. The Minister's response was the first time the Council's request to set a fee had been turned down.

11.4 The Chairperson added that the Minister had supported the Council's intention to enter discussions with STRB regarding the different demands of the GTCW and GTCE budgets. In particular, GTC England had been able to keep down costs due to their economies of scale. There were particular demands in Wales – distinctive education policies and bilingualism, for example, which meant that comparisons were not helpful.

11.5 Issues raised by members included: that it had not been previously deemed extraordinary by the Minister when the Council had set its fee for a number of years below the STRB fee reimbursement level; that at that time there did not appear to be any link between the Council's fee and that set in England but that this seemed to have changed; that Council should request a progress report on the Minister's discussions with STRB which she outlined in her letter and to establish a list of activities the Council would not be able to undertake without the increase in fee.

11.6 One member felt that the Council should economise its spending where necessary, so that it could undertake the additional work it wanted to carry out for the profession whilst ensuring that teachers did not pay more. He concurred that the Minister should be asked to pursue her officials' dialogue with STRB. Another member commented that the Chartered Teacher pilot should be funded by the Welsh Assembly Government as it was experimental. Additionally, some concerns were raised about the setting of different fees for England and Wales and that this might not be well received by the profession.

11.7 The Chairperson clarified that, in informal discussions with the STRB, he and the Chief Executive had striven for a greater reimbursement for all as opposed to a differential fee reimbursement for England and Wales.

11.8 A discussion then took place about the responsibilities of the Council in setting out a plan of its proposed activities and costing them appropriately. It was then for the employer, i.e. the Government, to establish how to fund the work. An existing special arrangement in place to recognise the increased costs of employing teachers in London, was noted.

11.9 In conclusion, members agreed that a robust response should be sent to the Minister in order to protect the financial independence and credibility of the Council.

11.10 With regards to the second issue for discussion, the Chief Executive explained that a reciprocal arrangement had been in place between GTC England and the Council which covered those teachers living on the border who might work in both England or Wales in a year. Based on their domicile, one single fee was paid to either GTC England or GTC Wales. This arrangement had assisted approximately 150-200 teachers but the withdrawal of the arrangement from England required discussion.

11.11 A discussion then took place of which the main points were: that the Council wished to strongly encourage GTC England to reconsider its position in light of the extra cost it would cause to teachers; the possibility of reimbursement of both fees by STRB; and the timescale within which a decision was needed. Hayden Llewellyn (*Deputy Chief Executive, Teachers' Qualifications, Registration and Professional Standards*) assured members that the reciprocal arrangement would stand until 2007-08 and that he would look into the possibility of double reimbursement.

11.12 The Chairperson concluded that a letter to GTCE should be drafted and a report provided to the Council on 3rd May 2007. Members concurred.

12. Professional Development Framework report (GTCW 03/07)

12.1 The Chief Executive introduced this paper and explained that it was set out in 4 parts: Firstly, the Ministerial response to the Strand 2 advice provided by Council; secondly, an update on the Chartered Teacher Consultation; thirdly, the current position of the Chartered Teacher pilot programme and lastly, the draft consultation proposals for Strands 3 & 4 of the framework.

12.2 The information provided an update to members on a number of key developments in the Council's work in establishing a coherent framework for teachers' professional recognition and accreditation in Wales. This is in line with one of Council's functions, set out in the 1998 Act: to carry out activities pertaining to the professional development of teachers at the invitation of the Welsh Assembly Government. The Chairperson and Chief Executive had met with the Minister on 24th October 2006 for discussions on the Advice and had gone on to make presentation to the Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Committee at the National Assembly for Wales on 9th November 2006 regarding strand 2 of the framework.

12.3 The Chief Executive reported initially on the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills response letter dated 10th January 2007. The response and attached annex provided some concern and seemed removed from the new partnership approach recently promoted by the Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills.

12.4 Members expressed concerns about the Assembly's potential interference in the scheme.

12.5 By contrast, another member felt that the Minister had requested further clarification regarding the Chartered Teacher programme's relationship with pay. He feared that without future Chartered Teacher accreditation, teachers might be unlikely to be successful in gaining promotion.

12.6 During a lengthy discussion the following points were made: that it would be pertinent to clarify what was meant in paragraph 6 of the annex to the Minister's response letter regarding "*The Council will need to liaise with those developing provision for the wider sector and identify areas where links would be beneficial and duplication could be avoided*" as this might be work that the Council might not wish to undertake; that the Chartered Teacher programme might be seen by officials as a useful vehicle for Assembly initiatives; that members felt that the Framework should exist separately from pay standards and be based on principles of professional development, whilst not being inconsistent with teachers' pay systems.

12.7 The discussion moved on to the second part of the report, an update from the Chartered Teacher standards consultation. Karen Evans (*Policy and Planning Manager*) advised members that over 600 responses had been received offering strong support for the programme.

12.8 Richard Parry Jones left the meeting at this point and rejoined the meeting once the discussion on the tender for Chartered Teacher pilot programme had been completed.

12.9 Hayden Llewellyn (*Deputy Chief Executive, Teachers' Qualifications, Registration and Professional Standards*) went on to report on the tender exercise to procure providers, advisors and assessors for the Chartered Teacher pilot. Members were advised that in excess of 300 teachers had expressed their interest with a large number of schools also keen to participate in the pilot. The closing date for the tender would be 23rd February 2007.

12.10 Finally, Gary Brace brought members' attention to the draft strands 3 & 4 of the consultation proposals which covered recording/self reflection and quality assurance aspects of the Professional Development Framework. The draft had been discussed at the Task Group meeting on 18th January 2007, but this was the first time members had seen the draft. Members were invited to provide a steer and their comments on the document chapter by chapter.

12.11 An amendment was requested on page 16, paragraph 34 regarding the Excellent Teacher Scheme positions which were now in place. Reference was made to the *Pay and Conditions* document which might provide useful information to Council officers.

12.12 The terminology used in the document was also highlighted by a member. The term 'Quality Assurance' might refer to the policing of the programme but an additional term, 'Quality Enhancement' might be used to use processes to improve the quality of the scheme over a period of time. Reference was made to the GTC Scotland Chartered Teacher model which used a dynamic model including quality enhancement activities which promised to evolve over time. It was thought that this model might be used by the Council.

12.13 Members were content with the draft and agreed that any further comments would be submitted to Hayden Llewellyn by 16th February 2007. The Chairperson gained agreement that the document should be remitted to the Policy Committee for further development.

12.14 Members also expressed their contentment overall with the work undertaken by officers in all 4 areas of the framework.

13. Funding of Induction & EPD - progress report (GTCW 04/07)

13.1 Hayden Llewellyn (*Deputy Chief Executive, Teachers' Qualifications, Registration and Professional Standards*) briefly introduced this paper, reminding members that the Council had taken on responsibility for the administration of the Funding of Induction and EPD, upon invitation from the Welsh Assembly Government, from 1st September 2006.

Funding of Induction:

13.2 The report had provided members with the administration results as at the end of the Christmas term. To date, £900,000 had been allocated. The Council's 20 working day service level agreement had been maintained, delivering efficient administration of the Assembly's funds.

13.3 Hayden Llewellyn made members aware that a small number of teachers, who had applied for Induction funding, had been identified as not registered with the Council. In these cases, the appropriate paperwork had been provided to schools and the funding would be issued once the teachers registered.

Funding of EPD:

13.4 Members were reminded that Early Professional Development funding was settled with schools annually. At the close of the Autumn term, £9000 had been paid.

13.5 Some small issues with the administration of the Assembly's funds for this area had been highlighted and were reported in paragraphs 18 to 22 of the cover paper. Firstly, a number of applications had fallen short of the allocated £1000 with some schools holding back applications for other development opportunities which might become available later in the financial year. In these cases, Council officers undertook to approve the applications provided the eligibility criteria were met and have re-iterated the fact that activities need to be costed before the Council settles any financial claims and that they should not exceed £1000. In addition, a significant number of applications had been received where the funding was to be used on much broader activities than was originally understood. Hayden Llewellyn assured members that this had been reported to the Executive Committee in December and a steer had been immediately sought from both Assembly officials and LEAs regarding the quality of applications.

13.6 The Chairperson invited questions and comments from members. Members were content with the report.

14. Professional Development Funding Programme - progress report (GTCW 05/07)

14.1 Members had been provided with a report on the Continuing Professional Development funding programme which showed that officers had allocated the funds originally passed to the Council by the Assembly for this task by mid-November 2006. An extra £200,000 received from the Assembly was then fully allocated by mid-January 2007. A further request for funds had resulted in £160,000 being issued and a £40,000 under-spend on the QTS budget provided the Council with the current £200,000 being allocated. Although allocation was moving quickly, this final piece of funding should prove to be sufficient.

14.2 Hayden Llewellyn (*Deputy Chief Executive, Teachers' Qualifications, Registration and Professional Standards*) reported this positive news, explaining that the extra £400,000 of funds had enabled a further 700-1000 teachers to gain further professional development.

14.3 One member questioned whether any potential left-over funds could be held for the following financial year. Hayden Llewellyn advised that no surplus was predicted and although 'carry-over' had been allowed in previous years, it would not be facilitated in future years following the agreement of a new Accounts Direction.

14.4 Another member queried whether an evaluation report would be provided at the close of the Group Bursary pilot. Hayden Llewellyn assured members that this would be given at the close of the 2 year pilot.

14.5 Members noted the progress made in administering the funding programme and were content with the report.

15. Professional Standards matters (GTCW 06/07)

15.1 The Chief Executive presented this paper, advising members that there were 3 areas for discussion and agreement. Firstly, the production of a casework summary which would be published openly; secondly, the proposal to introduce the use of non-Council members on Professional Standards Committees and lastly, to discuss the issue of consistency of approach towards the publication of hearings and outcomes.

15.2 The Chief Executive went on to draw members' attention to the recommendation of the Executive and Registration Committees to proceed with an option proposing the development of a casework summary report which would be published in the spirit of the Freedom of Information Act. This could be presented to the profession and the public in a number of ways, including use of the Council's website and *Teaching Wales* journals. Members were content for officers to work on a draft approaches.

15.3 Gareth Jones left the meeting at this point whilst discussions took place regarding the use of non-Council members on Professional Standards Committees. He returned once the discussion was complete.

15.4 Whilst reminding members about the regulations in place regarding the composition of Professional Standards Committees, the Chief Executive assured members that no changes to legislation would be needed to enable Council to carry out the proposed change. In the context of the recent increase in cases, he stated that there was no option but to go outside the Council to create such panels. The number of lay persons on Council provided the most difficult obstacle in creating the panels. A recent decision by GTC England to appoint 15 teachers and 10 lay members to supplement the Committee pool was highlighted.

15.5 The Chairperson invited questions from members. The issues of how to identify persons and the criterion to be applied were raised. Another member pointed out that, whilst he supported the move, the Council should not lose sight that it was still in its relative infancy and that members sitting on panels were also very close to and had been involved in the development of procedures and rules which they were then called upon to apply at such Investigating Committees/hearings. He went on to add that sufficient case history might need to be built up first which could be used as a training tool for such new persons.

15.6 Additional points and questions included: the possibility of Council staff handling increased cases; disappointment that not all members made themselves available to Professional Standards Committees; and the issue of financial payments to panel members.

15.7 This part of the discussion drew to a close when a proposal was made to accept the steer provided by officers and to invite work to be undertaken to bring further, specific recommendations to the next Council meeting. This proposal was seconded and agreed.

15.8 Members proceeded to discuss ways of publishing notifications of forthcoming hearings and the outcomes of the Professional Standards casework in order to bring a uniform approach. It was felt that care would have to be exercised in terms of confidentiality and that no personal details should be given. A particular difficulty was expressed in terms of the publication of the outcome of a Suitability case, in terms of whether the individual did become a member of the teaching profession or not. An example was offered where an individual might have to provide confidential and sensitive information to the Committee, only to be deemed unsuitable for registration into the teaching profession in Wales. This point was noted.

15.9 Another member summarised that whilst the rights of an individual and the general public needed to be weighed up equally, all orders made by Professional Conduct Committees were announced in public. The proposal would enable members of the public who were unable to attend the hearing on the day, to access the same information through the Council's website. The Chairperson went on to clarify that the proposal put to members would enable a common approach to be applied to the announcement of each type of hearing, whether conduct, competence, suitability or induction. Members agreed this proposal.

15.10 A query was raised regarding any possible approach to Professional Standards Committee members from the public or media following a case. The Chairperson responded with a brief description of the role of the Council's provider of PR services.

15.11 A final point of clarification was sought by a member with regards to the possible publication of Professional Standards Committee members' names. Hayden Llewellyn (*Deputy Chief Executive, Teachers' Qualifications, Registration and Professional Standards*) assured members that these were not provided on the Council's website.

16. GTCW Workload strategy (GTCW 07/07)

16.1 Karen Evans (*Policy and Planning Manager*) presented this paper, pointing out that the document had been discussed at the Policy Committee on 8th December 2006.

16.2 The Council had originally agreed an 8 point strategy for highlighting issues of teacher workload and bureaucracy in 2002. At the Council meeting in October 2006, members had reviewed the original strategy and the subsequent Policy Committee had made proposals for a possible way forward for the Council to address issues of teacher workload in light of the introduction of the 'Workload Agreement' and the creation of the School Workload Advisory Panel (SWAP).

16.3 Karen Evans made particular reference to the five areas of the original strategy which, it was proposed, could be taken forward together with an additional area which considered the potential negative effect of excessive workload on the ability of teachers to participate in professional development activities.

16.4 The Chief Executive added that the annual meeting between SWAP, the Chairperson and himself had taken place in 2006. At that time, SWAP officials indicated that they might be agreeable to formulate how a working together might assist in keeping workload issues in the public domain.

16.5 One member wished to express a concern that there did not appear to be a full understanding of the pressures weighing heavily on leadership teams and he suggested that the collecting of evidence should be reinstated in the Council's strategy. Whilst this appeared to be a SWAP responsibility, rather than within the Council's remit, the member felt that the General Teaching Council for Wales had a different perspective to express than that which SWAP would provide.

16.6 Members agreed to adopt the revised workload strategy.

17. Assembly consultation on Wales Curriculum 2008 (GTCW 08/07)

17.1 Karen Evans presented this paper, briefly advising members that the Council would need to draft a response to the Welsh Assembly Government's consultation on proposed changes to the national curriculum in Wales. Members were invited to agree the suggested timetable for the development and submission of the GTCW's response.

17.2 The Chairperson invited members to offer their comments. Council officers would draft a response which the Policy Committee could consider and agree at their next meeting in March 2007.

17.3 The Chief Executive highlighted that members might wish to welcome the greater flexibility and less prescriptive content of the proposals, the emphasis on skills and the new thinking on developing the curriculum across traditional sectors.

17.4 The Deputy Chairperson commented that Council might wish to flag up the change within the profession to the focus on skills and learning centres.

17.5 Members were content with the proposed timetable and would forward their comments to Council staff accordingly.

18. Standing orders (GTCW 09/07)

18.1 In presenting this paper, the Chief Executive explained that proposals to update the Council's standing orders, which had last been amended in July 2004, had been recommended in a recent internal audit. The amendments reflected changes and developments within the Council over the last few years and the need to reflect the new GTCW Constitution regulations as well as the desirability of cross-referring to other documents for detail, wherever possible.

18.2 Amendments to the draft document were suggested by the Deputy Chairperson for example, the need for consistency in referring to members.

18.3 Additionally a member pointed out that in paragraph 22.3 (Professional Standards hearings) referred to the possibility of parts being heard in Welsh and parts in English. It was unclear whether this allowed the teacher and witnesses to provide their evidence in whichever medium they preferred. The Chief Executive confirmed that the wording would be amended to remove the unnecessary detail and cross-refer to other documents.

18.4 Members were content with the proposals subject to the amendments reported above and agreed to adopt the revised Standing Orders at the next Council meeting on 3rd May 2007.

18.5 The Chairperson then proceeded to advise members that under Standing Orders where there was a vacancy on Council from amongst elected members, the person with the next highest number of votes should be approached. The Chief Executive explained that an individual who had stood for election in 2004 would be approached accordingly and a report made to Council in due course.

19. Election of teacher members to Council 2008 (GTCW 10/07)

19.1 Hayden Llewellyn (*Deputy Chief Executive, Teachers' Qualifications, Registration and Professional Standards*) briefly drew members' attention to the proposed election process and timetable which mirrored those used in 2004 and invited members to agree them.

19.2 Hayden Llewellyn noted an amendment required in the timetable regarding the 'receipt of nomination papers by contractor' which should read 9th November 2007.

19.3 Members were content and agreed the timetable and process.

20. Delivering "The Learning Country: Vision into Action" – the DELLS initiative (GTCW 11/07)

20.1 The Chief Executive introduced this paper which detailed the Welsh Assembly Government's DELLS' plans for delivering the priorities set out in their key policy document '*The Learning Country: Vision into Action'.*

20.2 The Chief Executive reported that he and the Chairperson had attending a meeting of the stakeholders group on 15th January 2007 at which discussions focussed on how a variety of organisations might collaborate most effectively to enhance capacity, reduce complexity and create a more innovative and ambitious approach which would drive up standards and performance. He reported the desire of Steve Marshall (*Director, Department for Education, Lifelong Learning & Skills*) to develop genuine partnerships between stakeholders. This appeared to open up positive opportunities for new work for the Council in the future.

20.3 The Chairperson supported the report of a major change within the Welsh Assembly Government and invited questions from members.

20.4 Members noted the report and were content.

21. Any other business.

21.1 The Chairperson wished to congratulate the Deputy Chairperson for the recent publication of her book *'The 9 habits of Highly Effective Teachers'.* Members concurred.

21.2 There was no other business.

The next Council meeting will take place on Thursday 3rd May 2007
at
The Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells