

COUNCIL

Minutes of the one hundred and ninth meeting of Council held on Wednesday 11 December 2013 at 10.00 am in Room 115, CCEA HQ, Clarendon Road, Belfast.

Present : Mr T Carson (Chairman) Mrs J Mussen
Mr M Donnelly Mr R Thompson
Mr J Wilkinson Mr E Cullen
Mrs M Crilly Mrs R Cowan
Dr P Cunningham Mrs C Harpur
Ms A Kerr Mr N Morton
Mr K Scally

Mr R Hanna (Interim Chief Executive)
Miss R Kennedy (Business Manager, Curriculum & Assessment)
Mr M Crossan (Business Manager, Examinations Assessment & Administration)
Mr G Byrne (Business Manager, ICT)
Mr J Daly (Financial Services Manager)

Miss N Kennedy (Manager, Council Secretariat)

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs C Gibson and Ms AM Duffy.

2 Chair's Business

New Council Members

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting, in particular recently appointed Council members : Ms Ana Kerr; Mr Kevin Scally and Mr Neill Morton.

FOI Requests

Members noted the most recent FOI requests.

Report on meeting with NCCA: 21 November 2013

The Chairman said he had met with The Chair and Chief Executive of NCCA and confirmed regular meetings would be arranged in the new year to discuss collaborative projects. Members welcomed re-engagement with NCCA.

3 Minutes of previous meeting held on 23 October 2013

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Dr Peter Cunningham and seconded by Mr Enda Cullen as a true and accurate record of the meeting. A copy was signed by the Chairman.

Action points

Members noted the status of the action points.

Record of Council Induction Meeting : 4 December 2013

Members noted the record of the Council Induction meeting (for new members) which took place on 4 December 2013.

4 Correspondence

Members noted correspondence in relation to :

- *2013/14 Pay Remits : (Letter from I Gallagher (DE) to Chief Executives' of NDPBs, 10 October 2013).*

The Interim Chief Executive advised that approval for the whole staff pay remit remained outstanding. This was also the case for staff eligible for PRP payments. He confirmed that representations continue to be made to progress the issues.

The Chairman was concerned that these delays would have an impact on staff morale.

He confirmed all budget related matters would be discussed at the next GAR meeting.

- *CCEA Business Case – Change of Scope to CCEA Legal Services Contract : (Letter from D Hughes (DE) to R Hanna 14 October 2013).*
- *CCEA Business Managers 2012/13 pay remit approval : (Letter from I Gallagher (DE) to R Hanna, 15 October 2013).*
- *Proposal for New GCSE Award Administered by CCEA : (Letter from D Heaney (DE) to R Hanna 15 October 2013).*
- *Computer Based Assessment – Independent Review : (Letter from P Sweeney (DE) to R Hanna 22 October 2013).*
- *Performance Measures in Schools : (Letter from D Heaney (DE) to R Hanna 23 October 2013).*
- *CCEA Qualifications Technology Roadmap Project : (Letter from D Hughes (DE) to R Hanna 23 October 2013).*
- *Outcome of October 2013 Monitoring Round : (Letter from C Tonner (DE) to R Hanna 24 October 2013).*
- *Letter from C Savage (DE) to K Sims (NASUWT) 14 November 2013.*

5 Governance and Accountability

The next Governance and Accountability meeting was confirmed for 14 January 2014.

6 Finance and Planning

Finance Committee Report : 3 December 2013

The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 3 December 2013 were provided for members' information.

The Chairman of the Committee drew attention to the detail of the minutes and confirmed members had fulfilled their scrutiny function on all finance issues. He reported on the following :

- *Outstanding Pay Remits* : approvals remain outstanding for a number of pay remits including whole staff payments for 2013/14. Representations continue to be made to progress the issues.
- *Finance Report as at 31 October 2013* : An overall underspend of £345K was reported at this time (1.7% against DE's net funding allocation).
- *Increase in Fees for CCEA membership of JCQ* : the proposal for CCEA to continue full membership of JCQ was approved.

The Interim Chief Executive advised that JCQ carry out a range of operational functions on behalf of the Awarding Organisations.

- *Policies* : 2 Corporate Policies were approved by the Committee.
- *Business Cases* : The QTR Business Case has been approved by DE and DfP.

A review is being conducted on the first 2 years of the On-Line Marking Project. Initial findings have confirmed original savings are not likely to be realised due to on-line standardising meetings proposed. Further discussion will take place once the review has been completed and outcomes known.

Members were updated on procurement activity, premises, building leases and the post-project evaluation process.

Finance Report as at 31 October 2013

C/108/1

The FM drew attention to the information provided in paper **C/108/1** and advised an overall underspend of £345K at that time. This represented 1.7% against DE's net funding allocation with is outside the 1% tolerance limit. The main savings were:

- Staff salaries/expenses and temporary staff wages (£126K)
- Examiner costs (£56K)
- Teacher release £106K).

This was offset by pressures in printing (£100K) and IT/leasing costs (£30K).

The FM advised that as at 30 November the budget was now within the 1% tolerance limit.

October Monitoring Round

Members noted that the October monitoring round had been completed.

January Monitoring Round

Members noted the information provided.

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 October 2013

C/108/2

Members were content with the information provided.

7 Audit

Audit and Risk Committee Report : 4 December 2013

The Chairman of the committee advised that the minutes would be issued following the meeting.

He confirmed members had fulfilled their scrutiny function on all of the audit and risk issues. Updates were provided on :

- *Internal Audit Contract* : members welcomed the return of ASM as CCEA's Internal Auditors from 2013-2016. An Audit Plan for this period was drafted in consultation with the Chief Executive and Chairs of Council and the Committee. It was agreed by the Chief Executive and brought forward to the Committee for approval.
- *Non-compliance with CCEA's purchasing arrangements* (Sept – Oct 13) : members noted the mitigation measures put in place to address the instances of non-compliance.
- *Single tender actions*
- *National Fraud Initiative 2012/13* : no incidents of fraud were reported.
- *NIAO Update : 2013/14 External Audit Strategy*
- *DE Update*
- *Regulatory Monitoring and Scrutiny*
- *Operational* readiness for January 2014 examinations series

Members also discussed the current situation regarding the Statutory End of Key Stage Assessment arrangements and Computer Based Assessment (CBA), in particular, feedback on the independent review carried out on policy and practice on CBA.

8 Education

Education Committee Report : 27 November 2013

The Chairperson drew attention to the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2013, tabled for information.

She advised that members received a presentation on GCSE and A Level Developments which included policy divergence in England and Wales and an overview of the recommendations arising from the Report on CCEA's Review of Qualifications.

Updates were provided on :

- *Entitlement Framework*
- *Revision of Specifications*
- *End of Key Stage Assessment Arrangements*
- *Computer Based Assessment* : Interim Feedback from Phase 2 Pilot Schools and Interim Findings on the Initial Pilot and Pre-Pilot on the Transformed Network.
- *Independent Review* : CBA

Following clarification on a number of issues, members were content with the information provided.

Endorsement of NICCY's Participation Policy Statement of Intent

C/109/3

The Chairperson advised that the document had been considered by the Education Committee. Members recommended it come forward to Council for further consideration and, if appropriate, endorsement.

A Council member suggested that clarification be sought on whether this was appropriate for CCEA. It was agreed that this would be taken forward.

Computer Based Assessment

The Business Manager, CAR (Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting), advised that the pilots would conclude on Friday 13 December. To date 15,000 assessments had been taken for each of the literacy and numeracy assessments.

It was confirmed that the issues with the pre-pilot schools had been addressed and solutions implemented by C2K. A report was being prepared based on feedback from suppliers, teachers and principals. This will feed into the main report for DE to assist them in making decisions for 2014.

Clarification was sought on whether the issues with the non-transformed schools had been resolved. It was confirmed that these are being progressed, however, no assurances have been received from C2K moving forward.

The Interim Chief Executive reminded members that he was the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for the delivery of the CBA pilot and had raised issues about ICT governance between organisations. He confirmed that he would progress the issues through the ICT Programme Board, chaired by Gavin Boyd, Chief Executive Designate, ESAIT, which included Chief Executives of the ELBs.

Independent Review

The Interim Chief Executive advised that an Independent Gateway Review (reporting directly to the Minister) took place during the week of 18 November. The scope of the review included :

- the development of policy and legislation
- implementation of InCAS
- the development of the tender process and impact of procurement process on implementation of NINA and NILA
- the development of NILA and NINA; and

- the lessons to be learnt.

Officers from DE, CCEA and C2K were asked to participate in the review. Those from CCEA included : Interim Chief Executive; Business Manager CAR, Programme Manager AOT and Business Manager, ICT.

The Review Team presented the initial, high level findings from the Review to the Interim Chief Executive (CCEA), the Accounting Officer/Chief Executive (WELB) and the Permanent Secretary (DE) on 22 November.

The Interim Chief Executive confirmed he felt the feedback was fair and that the Review Team took the time to familiarise themselves with the substantial amount of evidence provided. He reported that the view of the review team was that responsibilities should be aligned including C2K being responsible for providing software for use on the managed service and managing contacts with supplier. The team also commented on the role of DE to ensure alignment of priorities across organisations.

In moving forward, the assessments will be closely monitored and managed and outcomes scrutinised to ensure CCEA can demonstrate they are fit for purpose.

Members welcomed the initial findings. The Chairman asked the Interim Chief Executive to seek a copy of the report from DE.

The Interim Chief Executive wished to commend all the officers for the significant amount of work required to prepare the documentation for the Review.

He assured members that officers would continue to closely monitor the outcomes of the pilots to ensure the assessments are valid and fit for purposes. All issues would be documented and raised with the appropriate parties going forward.

The Interim Chief Executive advised that the OECD report on Assessment and Evaluation, including the framework in Northern Ireland had been published on 10 December. For CCEA, this has provided significant external validation on the direction of travel regarding Policy, however recognises implementation challenges. Members would be provided with the link to the document.

End of Key Stage Assessment Arrangements

The Business Manager (CAR) confirmed that the necessary changes have been made to the systems in order to proceed this year. A comprehensive schedule of training and awareness sessions have been organised as well as guidance and support events for teachers. An operational risk monitor was being maintained and monitored by the programme board; and issued to DE as appropriate.

She reported that DE and CCEA continue to engage with the Unions on a regular basis. The Unions have advised they will continue with industrial action until the publication of the OECD report. Concern was expressed that should the action continue, schools ability to meet the first deadline of 18 February will be severely compromised. DE and CCEA will meet with the Unions in January 2014 to consider the implications going forward.

Members noted the information provided.

9 Qualifications

Review of Specifications

C/109/4

The Interim Chief Executive drew attention to the information provided in paper **C/109/4**. He confirmed that all qualifications require accreditation and this function would now be carried out by the CCEA Accreditation team. As part of the Review of Specifications, the capacity will be increased in this team.

A business case is currently being prepared and will be considered by the Finance Committee at the next appropriate meeting before being submitted to DE/DfP.

Members would be updated as appropriate.

10 Any Other Business

None identified by the Secretariat.

11 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was confirmed as **Wednesday 12 March 2014** at 10.00 am.

The Chairman wished to place on record his thanks to officers for the significant achievements and pieces of work completed throughout the year and to Council for their input since coming on board.

He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.