

## **COUNCIL**

Minutes of the one hundred and thirteenth meeting of Council held on Tuesday 11 November 2014 at 12 noon 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  
Dr A Kerr Ms C Gibson  
Dr P Cunningham Mrs R Cowan  
Mrs C Harpur

Mr R Hanna (Interim Chief Executive)  
Ms AM Duffy (Director of Qualifications)  
Ms R Kennedy (Business Manager, Education Strategy)

Miss N Kennedy (Manager, Council Secretariat)

### **Introduction**

The Chair welcomed members and officers to the meeting.

#### **1 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Ms M Crilly and Mr N Morton.

#### **2 Chair's Business**

##### ***Resignation of Mr Kevin Scally***

The Chair advised that Mr Scally had resigned from Council due to work commitments. On behalf of the Council, the Chair wished to place on record his thanks to Mr Scally for his contribution to the work of the Council and its committees over the last 12 months.

DE will advise when the appointments process will begin to appoint a new member to Council.

The Chair agreed to write to Mr Scally on behalf of Council.

##### ***FOI Requests***

Members noted the most recent FOI requests.

##### ***Final Ratification of Revised Management Statement and Financial Memorandum(MSFM) – July 2014 C/113/1***

The Chair confirmed that the revised MSFM was approved by the Finance Committee at its meeting on 17 September 2014.

He advised that a Council member had raised some issues and he agreed to a meeting to progress these.

Subject to these clarifications, members formally ratified the MSFM 2014.

### *Employee Engagement Programme*

The Interim Chief Executive confirmed that he had established a Staff Engagement Group made up of representatives across the organisation at a range of levels. The Group meets once a month and has been productive and constructive since its establishment.

He updated members on the following :

- An event marking the 20 Year Anniversary of the establishment of CCEA
- 2 very successful Christmas events, with a range of talented staff performances
- Education Conferences and Education Seminars
- Refresh of the CCEA Intranet to communicate a range of new information to all staff
- Video showcases on the work of various departments across the organisation
- Empowering staff across the organisation
- Launch of the Staff Well-Being Programme
- Communications Strategy.

The following initiatives are currently underway:

- Corporate Governance Training
- Staff consultation on the Recruitment Policy
- Corporate Planning

The Chair thanked the Interim Chief Executive and said it was important to continue to develop staff and raise morale.

A Council member asked if opportunities could be increased for staff to mix and meet with Council.

The Chair commended the DoQ and her team for an excellent programme for the Education Conference which took place on 24 October 2014.

A Council member sought clarification on the 'how staff felt about the organisation'. The Interim Chief Executive assured members, that in spite of challenging circumstances, CCEA has continued to meet the targets set by DE and this was a testament to the good will of staff. He stated that the organisation could not produce the quality of outcomes, nor realise the achievements without the commitment of its staff, many of whom go above and beyond what is expected.

Members noted the information provided.

### **3 Minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 18 June 2014**

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Mrs Christine Harpur and seconded by Mr Martin Donnelly as a true and accurate record. A copy was signed by the Chair.

#### *Action Points*

*Item 4 : Outstanding Pay Remits* : the Chair advised that DE approval has been given and outstanding payments have been made.

*Item 5 : Budget* : the Chair advised that a meeting with the Minister had been arranged for 15 October. This was subsequently cancelled due to the Minister's work pressures. An alternative meeting has been arranged with a DE official for 19 November 2014. Members noted the status of the remaining action points.

#### **4 Correspondence**

Members noted the various correspondence in relation to :

- Computer Based Assessment : CCEA Advice on the Way Forward
- Timing of Recruitment Process for Chief Executive
- Final Outturn Expenditure & MEMR 2013/14
- Vacancy Control Legacies
- Sustainable Development Statutory Duty
- Qualifications Issues : GCSE Grading
- CCEA Business Case : Revision of Specifications
- 2013/14 CCEA Business Managers Pay Remit Approval
- 2013/14 CCEA Top Management Team Pay Remit Approval.

There were no issues arising.

#### **5 Governance and Accountability**

*Minutes of the Governance and Accountability Review Meeting : 23 September 2014*

The Chair drew attention to the minutes (previously circulated) and provided an overview on the range of issues discussed. He confirmed that DE was content with progress made in all areas.

#### **6 Education Strategy**

***Draft Advice : The Way Forward for CBA***

***EC/113/2***

The Chair of the Education Committee provided an overview of the discussion which took place at the meeting on 22 October 2014.

The Chair of Council drew attention to page 2 of the document which highlighted the fact that CCEA was asked to give advice to feed into policy and reminded members that account needed to be taken of :

- The feasibility of providing an assessment developed by CCEA; and
- The Council's view on whether other options would meet policy objectives more efficiently and effectively.

The Interim Chief Executive suggested that in the context of providing advice, Council considered the underpinning principles of assessment.

Following detailed discussions on the options provided, members agreed that the options were broad enough for DE consideration, and asked that the following points be put forward to DE:

- The need for a partnership to deal with the technical delivery of the Assessments and short term contracts would be avoided (Option 5).

- The importance of the CBA process in terms of pupils' learning skills, links with the parents and the overall benefit to the school.
- Learners interests should be kept at the centre.
- Ensure CBA is diagnostic and student centred and is not a system check for DE accountability.
- The preferred option should have cognisance of parameters of policy.
- Computer Based Assessment must be mandatory with results shared with parents.
- There must be a common form of assessment in all schools ie. the same set of assessments for all to allow parents to compare schools 'like for like' on assessment.
- All assessments must be standardised against the Northern Ireland Curriculum and relevant to the needs of the pupils in Northern Ireland schools.
- As CCEA is responsible for curriculum & assessment (in post-primary schools) CCEA should also be responsible for CBA in the primary sector.
- It is essential that a bespoke solution is developed to ensure a suitable system which caters for local needs with appropriate standardisation for Northern Ireland is put in place.
- Should schools be given a choice of 'kite marked' assessments, this removes the risk from CCEA, however locates the risk with schools.

The Interim Chief Executive sought clarification on the following principles:

- It was Council's view that it would be preferable to have assessment early in the school year?
- Does Council believe adaptive assessment should be adopted?
- Does Council believe the same assessment should be used by all schools?

Following discussion, Council agreed with the principles put forward and asked that these be incorporated into the covering letter to DE with the Advice.

Members formally agreed the draft advice to go forward to DE.

## **7 Qualifications**

### ***Presentation on Summer Examinations Series 2014***

The Director of Qualifications (DoQ) gave a detailed presentation on the Summer Examinations series 2014. This included :

- Market Share for GCE and GCSE 2014
- GCE A2 and GCSE Entries from 2010-2014
- Issue of results headlines for GCE and GCSE, including grade performance and most popular subjects in Northern Ireland
- Malpractice
- Targets for 2014 and 2015

Members commended the DoQ and her teams for the significant amount of work completed to ensure a successful summer examinations series and the effort by staff to ensure the accelerated remarks services was completed by 28 August.

The Interim Chief Executive wished to place on record his personal thanks to the DOQ for the way in which she handled the challenges during the awarding season due to an industrial dispute which was targeted to have maximum impact. He commended the good will of CCEA staff who stepped in at short notice and went the extra mile to ensure the awarding ran as planned.

## **8 Any Other Business**

A Council member asked if it would be possible for a booklet to be published on the changes and developments occurring in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

### *Education Conference*

The DoQ circulated copies of background papers together with the presentations and outcomes of the Education Conference held in May 2014.

## **9 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 10 December 2014 at 10.00 am in Room 115.

The Chair thanked members and officers for their input into the meeting.

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CHAIRMAN

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DATE