

COUNCIL

Minutes of the one hundred and tenth meeting of Council held on Wednesday 12 March 2014 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
Ms M Crilly Mrs R Cowan
Dr P Cunningham Mrs C Harpur
Dr A Kerr Mr N Morton
Ms C Gibson

Mr R Hanna (Interim Chief Executive)

Ms AM Duffy (Director Qualifications)
Mr J Daly (Financial Services Manager)

Mrs T McComiskey (Qualifications & Skills Accreditation) Item 7 only

Miss N Kennedy (Manager, Council Secretariat)

Introduction

The Chairman welcomed members, in particular, Ms Clare Gibson, to her first meeting of Council.

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr K Scally; Ms R Kennedy and Mr M Crossan.

2 Chair's Business

The Chairman confirmed that Mrs Terri McComiskey would attend for Item 7 : Draft Response to Review of Apprenticeships.

Election of Vice-Chair

Members noted the election of vice chair would take place in a closed session at the end of the meeting.

Remuneration Committee

The Chairman reminded members that a Remuneration Committee meeting would take place following close of Council business.

On-Board Training

Members were advised that on-board training for new members and those who had missed the previous two sessions had been organised for 6 June 2014. Further details would be provided in due course.

FOI Requests

Members noted the most recent FOI requests.

Minister's Statement on Evaluation and Assessment

The Interim Chief Executive drew attention to the Minister's statement and confirmed he would be considering any implications for CCEA going forward.

Independent Review on Computer Based Assessment (December 2013)

The Interim Chief Executive welcomed the Minister's acceptance of all of the recommendations in the 'Harkin Report'. He confirmed that Council would be provided with a critique of the document. The Chairman asked for a report on progress against the recommendations to be presented to Council at the June meeting.

Clarification was sought on when the contract for the computer based assessments expired. The Interim Chief Executive confirmed that the contract was now in its 3rd year with a possible extension of a further 2 years. He advised that DE was undertaking a review around assessment in general and CCEA is part of these discussions.

Review of GCSE and 'A' Level Qualifications

He welcomed the Minister's acceptance of all 49 recommendations outlined in CCEA's final report on the Review and confirmed that CCEA officers are working with colleagues in DE on an action plan. Further work would come forward as appropriate to Education Committee and Council.

The Chairman asked for Council to be updated on progress against the action plan at the June meeting.

Education Matters

The Chair of the Education Committee commended the document '*Education Matters*' issued to Council by the Director of Qualifications.

3 Minutes of previous meeting held on 11 December 2013

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 December 2013 were proposed by Dr Peter Cunningham and seconded by Mr John Wilkinson 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.

4 Correspondence

Members noted correspondence in relation to :

- *CCEA Performance Related Pay Policy and Framework 2012/13 and 2013/14 (letter from F Hepper to R Hanna 28 January 2014).*

- *PISA 2012 : Provision of Item Level Data (letter from D Hughes to R Hanna 30 January 2014).*

Members welcomed this development.

- *2013/14 Budget Allocation – Production and Issue of Concussion Communications to Schools (letter from D Heaney to R Hanna 11 February 2014).*
- *DE Concussion Leaflet for Schools (letter from S Lawlor to R Hanna 21 February 2014).*

A Council member commended CCEA on the quality of the leaflet and congratulated the Interim Chief Executive for the significant amount of work completed. She asked if the leaflet could be made available in digital format.

The Chairman, on behalf of Council, congratulated the Multimedia team for the design of the leaflet.

5 Governance and Accountability

The Chairman outlined the purpose of the DE/CCEA Governance and Accountability Review (GAR) meetings.

Minutes of Governance and Accountability Review Meeting : 14 January 2014

A Council member sought clarification on whether there was sufficient capacity to carry out the Review of Specifications to ensure first teaching in 2016. The Interim Chief Executive confirmed that arrangements were being made to increase capacity in the relevant areas to ensure sufficient officers were available.

Date of next meeting

The next Governance and Accountability Review meeting was scheduled for 17 April 2014.

6 Finance and Planning

Finance Committee Report : 29 January 2014

The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 29 January 2014 were provided for members' information.

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

- *Interim Finance Report as at 31 December 2013:* at this time an overall underspend of £227K was reported (slightly in excess of DE's 1% target). This was a favourable position at this point in the financial year.
- *Draft Budget 2014/15 :* members were provided with a high level summary of the draft budget submission 2014/15.

Members were updated on all procurement and business case activity.

Finance Report as at 31 January 2014

C/110/1

The Interim Chief Executive provided an overview of the work programme targets and confirmed that the late approval for CCEA's full budget had a significant impact on meeting the budget this year.

The Finance Manager (FM) drew attention to the information provided and outlined the main risks and issues. At that time an overall underspend of £356K was reported. The February position was £120K – a significant improvement on the January figures. He confirmed that this was within the 1% tolerance limit and arrangements have been put in place to address any underspend as we approach year end.

Clarification was sought on whether DE had recognised the impact of the late allocation of budget. This was confirmed.

Members wished to place on record their thanks to the Finance Manager and his team on this achievement. The Interim Chief Executive also wished to acknowledge the support from all managers and budget holders across the organisation for their contributions.

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 January 2014

C/110/2

Members noted the information provided.

7 Qualifications

January 2014 Series

The Director of Qualifications advised that the January 2014 series had been completed successfully.

Education Matters

The Director of Qualifications drew attention to the booklet (previously issued to Council) entitled '*Education Matters*'. It brings together the presentations, thinking and outcomes from the group discussions at the conference which took place in October 2013.

Members welcomed this as a very informative way of providing updates on the education debate in CCEA.

The Interim Chief Executive advised that plans to hold an Education Symposium are in progress.

Draft Response to Consultation : Review of Apprenticeships

C/110/3

The Chairman welcomed Mrs McComiskey (Qualifications and Skills Accreditation) to the meeting.

Mrs McComiskey drew attention to paper **C/110/3** and provided an overview of the proposed draft response for members' consideration.

The Chairman asked members to consider the draft response and forward any substantive amendments or inclusions to the Manager of the Secretariat outside of the meeting.

The Interim Chief Executive and Chairman would sign off the final response before the deadline for submission (7 April 2014) and a copy forwarded to Council for their information.

9 Draft Schedule of Meetings

C/110/4

The Chairman referred to paper **C/110/4** and asked members to note the dates for Council and Committee meetings from September 2014 to June 2015.

Any changes to scheduled meetings will be notified as soon as the need arises.

10 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for **Wednesday 18 June 2014** at 10.00 am.

Closed Session of Council

8 Any Other Business

Election of Vice-Chair

The Chairman conducted a closed session of Council to elect a Vice-Chair.

Mr Enda Cullen and Mrs Christine Harpur were nominated by Council colleagues.

Following a private ballot, Mr Enda Cullen was elected as Vice-Chair.