

# Northern Ireland Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

## Council

Minutes of the fifty-third meeting of Council, held on Wednesday 15 September 2004 at 1000 hours in Radisson Hotel, Belfast.

### Present

Dr A Lennon (Chairman)  
Mr J Clarke  
Mrs D Black  
Mr D Thompson

Dr A Murray  
Mr J Ellison  
Ms M Watson  
Dr W Mulryne

Mr R Cushnie, Assessor, Department of Education (DE)  
Mr H McCullough, Assessor, Department for Employment and Learning (DEL)

Mr G Boyd, Chief Executive  
Dr A Walker, Head of Education Services  
Mr D Mulholland, Head of Corporate Services

Miss N Kennedy, Manager CE Office

### 1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr B Carlin; Mr B Turtle; Ms J Bell; Mrs M Cree; Professor Peter Roebuck; Mrs H McClenaghan and Ms P O'Farrell.

### 2 Chairman's business

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting, in particular, Mr Richard Cushnie from DE and Mr Harry McCullough from DEL.

He reported that :

- CCEA have had another successful examinations season for summer 2004.

Dr Murray congratulated all staff involved on an excellent performance and asked that the Council's thanks be passed on.

The Chief Executive wished to place on record his thanks to Anne-Marie Duffy for the awarding and Martin Quinn for the processing of the examinations.

- The Minister has approved the proposals for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. Subsequent meetings took place with Danny Kennedy MLA regarding Costello and the new curriculum; and Ian Paisley Jr. MLA regarding the Early Years.
- A meeting has taken place with the Minister, Permanent Secretary and other senior officers from the Department of Education to brief them on the development work on the curriculum review and on the area of learning for life and work.
- The Tomlinson 14-19 Report will be published on the 16 October.

- NIBEP will be wound up in October 2004.
- The Annual Staff Education Conference will take place in The Radisson Hotel, Sligo on 30 September and 1 October.
- A series of dinners has been arranged with Principals from FE Colleges and Secondary Schools from October to December. A further series will be arranged for Grammar Principals and Admissions/Faculty Officers from Universities early in 2005. Members will be notified of the dates and are invited to attend as appropriate.
- The Joint Conference with NCCA will take place on 14 April 2005 in Galway. Further details will be provided before the event.
- Julie Bell gave birth to a daughter on 1 September. Members congratulated Julie on the birth of her daughter.
- The next meeting will take place in the City Hotel, Armagh. This will be Dr Walker's last meeting and members have been invited to a farewell dinner after the Council meeting.

### **3 Minutes of previous meeting held on 9 June 2004**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2004 were approved by Council and a copy signed by the Chairman.

#### *Action points*

The Chief Executive reported that:

- The Minister made an announcement on the Curriculum Review proposals in June and has accepted those for Key Stages 1-3. Further work has been requested on the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 4.
- Curriculum and Assessment Review – a literacy review has been requested. Progress and outcomes will be reported through the Curriculum and Assessment Committee.
- Pupil Profile project – work is ongoing. All points raised have been taken on board. There will be a detailed workshop for Council at the meeting on 21 October for further discussions.
- ALTA – discussions have taken place with the Department regarding Corporate Governance and C2K.
- FE Strategy – all points raised by members were taken on board and incorporated into the response.

Dr Murray expressed concern about exemplar plans. The CASS service should be fully briefed about the new curriculum. The new curriculum will be statutory from 2006 and we needed to stress that 2005 will be a pilot year. She supported the Early Years' pilot and hoped that this will be taken on as a model going forward.

Dr Walker confirmed the roll out of the statutory requirements from 2006 would be phased. Awareness raising programmes will be put in place from January 2005 for Principals of Primary and Post Primary Schools and this will also feed into the professional development programme for teachers. He assured members a common message will be sent from all partners to ensure commitment and enthusiasm from teachers from the beginning.

The Chairman sought assurance that we would meet with CASS to ensure common message and clarified that support materials were being produced to support the curriculum proposals.

Dr Walker confirmed that a partnership has been set up with the boards, C2K and other partners. Teams have been set up to look at particular areas. Support materials are being developed and a Communications Group has been established to ensure all messages have been agreed amongst partners and delivered to the highest quality.

The Chairman requested a routine feedback at each Council meeting from the implementation group.

Mr Clarke confirmed that the group had been productive to date. He said that teachers must be confident in taking this new curriculum forward.

The Chief Executive reported that the working parties were working well. He assured members that we would work closely with the Communications Group to ensure good communication to teachers regarding the Curriculum. The wider communication issue is for the Department of Education to take on board.

Dr Murray welcomed the exceptional closure days for the different aspects of change and asked that this continue for all the important changes ahead.

The Chairman said that all points raised would be taken on board.

## **Examinations**

The Chairman informed members that a number of presentations would be given on this year's performance, improvements for marked share and the modernisation programme. He welcomed Ms AM Duffy, Mr M Quinn and Dr C Sproule to the meeting.

### *Statistics*

Ms Duffy gave a presentation on the overall entries and comparisons from 2002 to 2004. 85% of entries at A Level in CCEA are from the grammar sector which is not the case for other awarding bodies who are stronger in the secondary sector. The Chief Executive reported that we had just under 40,000 entries this year with the joint venture with ICAA.

The Chairman said that we expect to see larger uptake as we continue to introduce much wider ranging GCSEs into schools across all-ability range.

The Chief Executive reported that the Moving Images Arts Pilot had been successful. A small number of schools were involved. This qualification is about the capability to use the technology by building it into a qualification. This moves along side a qualification offered by the University of Ulster in Film and Media Studies and to date there has been a huge amount of interest from the UK.

Dr Walker wished to place on record his thanks and congratulations to Andrew McAfee and his staff in CCEA Multimedia who produced the software.

The Chairman expressed concern that the Minister and Permanent Secretary of the Department of Education need to ensure that CCEA are fully integrated with C2K going forward. The Chief Executive assured members that discussions were ongoing and would report progress at the next meeting.

Members were happy with the information provided. The Chairman thanked Ms Duffy for her presentation and congratulated her and her staff on a very successful awarding season for Summer 2004.

#### *Improved Performance on Major Subjects with Low Market Share*

Dr Sproule highlighted the current initiatives, how well they were doing and how market share can be improved in GCSE French; Mathematics and Religious Studies. The Chief Executive stated that more centres are coming back to us due to the rigorous marketing approach.

The Chairman said we will gradually increase market share in these area and need to raise awareness of CCEA and the qualifications we have on offer.

Mr Clarke raised the issue of RE. The Chairman agreed that Mr Clarke and the Chief Executive will consider the factors in relation to RE going forward.

It was agreed that copies of the QDS Newsletter be circulated to members.

Members thanked Dr Sproule for his presentation.

#### *Modernisation Programme*

Mr Quinn gave a detailed presentation on the Examinations Modernisation Programme and outlined the changes to enhance the current examinations process.

The Chairman said this is a major project with major policy implications. He asked that all of the policy issues be highlighted for Council to discuss going forward.

It was agreed that the Chairman and Chief Executive would meet with the Permanent Secretary to keep them fully up to speed with this issue.

The Chairman thanked Mr Quinn for his presentation and congratulated him and his staff on an excellent examinations processing performance for 2004.

#### **Workshop**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Cecil Holmes to the meeting and summarised the current position.

The Chairman summarised the current position. The whole area of Learning for Life and Work has now been placed at the core of the new curriculum. The Minister of Education, Mr Barry Gardiner has agreed to the CCEA proposals for the revised Northern Ireland Curriculum and has been made aware of CCEAs proposed actions to ensure successful implementation in this area.

We have established a committee to think through and design the implementation of this initiative in a practical and beneficial way for all learners, taking account of the wider community. We have agreed that the committee will split into 4 sub-groups to take work forward in the areas of :

- Enterprise/Entrepreneurship;
- Careers planning;
- Engaging with the community; and
- Running school trials, testing and reporting back.

Mr Holmes gave a presentation on the area of Learning for Life and Work. He highlighted the main challenges; the key messages and identified main aspects of the work of the committee, in particular:

- challenging the status quo;
- giving support, expertise, drive and vision to this important initiative;
- offer pragmatic, frank advice and
- help to make it happen.

The Chairman thanked Mr Holmes for his presentation.

Mr McCall wished to place on record his congratulations to Mr Holmes on the quality of his presentation and also his commitment, enthusiasm and expertise in driving forward this initiative.

The Chairman said he was encouraged with the amount of work going on in the organisation in this area. We have achieved buy in from the Permanent Secretaries from Department of Education and Department for Employment and Learning to enable us to go forward at policy and operational level.

Members would be updated on progress at future meetings.

### **Any other business**

None identified.

### **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 21 October 2004 at 11 am in the City Hotel, Armagh. This will be an all day meeting followed by a farewell dinner for Dr Walker.

Dr Murray apologised in advance for this meeting.

