

CCEA

Council

Minutes of the ninety-fourth meeting of Council held on Wednesday 20 April 2011 at 10.00 am in Room 115, CCEA, Clarendon Road, Belfast.

Present : Mrs H McClenaghan (Vice-Chairperson) Mr D Thompson
Mrs D Black Ms P O'Farrell
Mr J Collins Ms M Crilly
Mr J Clarke

Mr G Boyd (Interim Chief Executive)
Mr M Quinn (Director, Corporate Services)
Ms AM Duffy (Director, Qualifications)
Mr R Hanna (Director, Education Strategy)
Mr J Daly (Finance Manager)
Mr R McCune (Regulation and Accreditation Manager) Item 8 only

Miss N Kennedy (Manager, Council Secretariat)

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs K Godfrey and Mr J Wilkinson.

2 Chairperson's Business

The Vice-Chair welcomed members to the meeting and advised that Mr Daly would be present up until Item 6 and Mr McCune would join the meeting at Item 8.

Finance Committee and Education Committee minutes were tabled for members' information.

3 Minutes of previous meeting held on 24 February 2011

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Mr Jim Collins and seconded by Ms Michele Crilly as a true and accurate record. A copy was signed by the Vice-Chair.

Action Points

Members were updated on the following :

Item 2 : Malpractice : the Director of Qualifications (DoQ) advised that one part of the paper had been disallowed. Candidates received their results on Thursday 14 April 2011.

Item 6 : Teacher Release : the Interim Chief Executive confirmed he had written to DE setting out CCEA's concerns regarding teacher release funding. A copy would be issued to members.

Item 8 : GCSE Science Revision : the DoQ confirmed that a report outlining the delays on the biology specification issues had been submitted to the Interim Chief Executive.

4 Correspondence

The Interim Chief Executive drew members' attention to the correspondence provided.

Members noted the information.

5 Governance and Accountability

Accountability Review Meeting : 21 April 2011

The Interim Chief Executive informed members that the next Accountability Review meeting with DE would take place on Thursday 21 April 2011. The Vice-Chair would be supported by the Top Management Team.

The Vice-Chair wished to place on record her thanks to officers for the papers and support provided in advance of the meeting.

Committee (draft) Terms of Reference

A letter from Mrs K Godfrey (DE Observer) was tabled for members' information. The Interim Chief Executive advised that the changes suggested would be reflected in the final versions of the ToR.

In relation to Regulation, members agreed that this should now be the responsibility of the Audit and Risk Committee.

Paragraphs 1.1 and 2.3 to be revised in all 3 ToR.

Audit & Risk Committee ToR *C/94/1*

Members adopted the ToR subject to the inclusion of Regulation.

Finance Committee ToR *C/94/2*

Members adopted the ToR subject to the changes suggested by DE and asked that this be cross-referenced with the Management Statement.

Education Committee ToR *C/94/3*

Members adopted the ToR subject to the inclusion of development of curriculum in addition to qualifications.

General

It was agreed the revisions would be made and all ToRs issued to Council and relevant Committee members as final documents.

6 Finance and Planning

Finance Committee Report : 5 April 2011

The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 5 April were tabled for members' information.

The Chairman of the Committee advised that the 2008/09 Accounts would not be qualified. The Interim Chief Executive confirmed that a note would now be added to the Accounts (subject to confirmation from the Audit Office).

The interim end of year position would be presented to the next Finance Committee.

Procurement

A full update was received on all procurement issues.

DE has been kept fully up to date with all developments and issues in this area.

Delegated Authority Limit

The Interim Chief Executive will write to DE seeking an increase in the delegated authority limit to £100K-£150K. Advice from members' will be sought on the content of the letter.

Business Cases

All Business Cases presented were scrutinised and approved.

Voluntary Severance

15 out of the 18 voluntary severance offers were accepted and staff will leave the organisation between 31 March and 30 June 2011.

Further updates from Marketing and Communications and HR were also received.

Finance Report as at 28 February 2011

C/94/4

The Finance Manager (FM) reported a total underspend of £739K.

A summary of the main areas of underspend together with reports on Baseline, Project and Capital was provided in paper **C/94/4**.

It was acknowledged that although the budget had been carefully managed, there were several outside factors which contributed to this year's underspend, these were:

- Unpredictability of teacher release claims;
- Lower than anticipated printing costs; and
- Difficulty in recruiting specialist IT staff.

Members were assured that this would be justified to the Permanent Secretary.

The Vice-Chair confirmed that DE had been kept informed on issues as they arose.

Budget Cover for Voluntary Severance

Members noted that these costs would be accrued within the 2010/11 financial year.

Budget Allocation 2011/12

Members noted the provisional budget allocation letter received from DE on 30 March 2011, which authorised CCEA to spend no more than 3/12 of the budget and seeking confirmation

that no long term commitments would be entered into. The Interim Chief Executive confirmed written confirmation had been submitted to DE.

He advised that a further allocation letter confirming the final budget allocation and any additional work to be undertaken would come forward in due course.

Statement of Financial Position as at 28 February 2011

C/94/5

Members noted the information provided.

7 Audit

Audit and Risk Committee Report : 8 March 2011

The Chairperson of the committee drew members' attention to the detail of the minutes.

She advised that the Quarterly Assurance Report would be a standing item on the agenda and the OfQual Stage 2 Action Plan had been fully discussed.

Audit Activity

Members were advised that 6 audits had been completed since the last Council meeting. 3 received a satisfactory assurance and 3 limited assurance.

The most recent audits finalised were: Professional Associates; ICT Coding and Interfaces and Teacher Release. Upon completion further information had been provided on Teacher Release and Procurement.

The DoCS reported that an overall limited assurance rating has been given by the Auditors in advance of receiving the Management Response. The Vice Chair expressed concern that this assurance was issued before the process had been completed.

The Interim Chief Executive said that management deliberately targeted internal audit activity in these areas as they had concerns about controls.

The Chairperson of the committee confirmed that she would request a closed meeting of the committee and the Auditors.

A special meeting of the committee had been convened to finalise the Statement of Internal Control on 20 April 2011 at 13.30 hours.

Members noted the information provided.

8 Regulation

The Vice Chair welcomed Mr Roger McCune, Regulation & Accreditation Manager, to the meeting.

Review of Vocational Education – The Wolf Report

C/94/6

The R&A Manager gave a presentation on the high level issues arising from the report. These included :

- The remit and scope of the review
- The problems and solutions
- The way forward and challenges ahead; and
- Support for what is happening in Northern Ireland

Following a detailed discussion, the Interim Chief Executive said it was important to clarify with DE what advice was required on the implications for Northern Ireland.

The Vice Chair suggested that a formal invitation be sent to the Minister to meet with a delegation of Council members. The Interim Chief Executive agreed to consider this.

9 Education

Education Committee Report : 7 April 2011

The Chairperson drew member's attention to the detail of the minutes provided.

Members noted the action plan arising out of the scrutiny of the GCE A Level Biology examinations for 2011.

A proposal for Entry Level Provision was discussed and members asked for further consideration to be given to a short course for Learning for Life and Work and equivalences for Occupational Studies.

The recommendations from the consultation on Future Qualification Provision for learners with Special Educational Needs were accepted by the committee.

Monitoring of OfQual Recommendations

C/94/7

The DoQ S advised that DE continued to monitor progress against the action plans through monthly meetings with TMT.

Stage 1 : 12 recommendations were accepted. 38 actions identified, the detail of which is contained in paper ***C/94/7***.

Stage 2 : 9 recommendations were accepted. 28 actions identified, the detail of which is also contained in paper ***C/94/7***.

An annual review will be conducted and an improvement log has been set up.

Members commended the level of detail provided in the monitoring grids and action plans for Stages 1 and 2 and wished to place on record their congratulations to the DoQ and all staff involved in introducing these new processes.

A Council member suggested that the Vice Chair write to the Permanent Secretary on behalf of Council commending the way in which this issue is being handled, in particular, the rigorous and detailed approach to the action plan following the findings and recommendations of the OfQual investigations. Members agreed.

The Interim Chief Executive and Vice Chair agreed to progress this and circulate the letter to members.

10 Any Other Business

EFQM

The Interim Chief Executive confirmed that the EFQM Model would be reinstated to ensure all procedures were up to date and fit for purpose. The first visit would take place towards the end of May 2011.

Staff Survey 2011

The Interim Chief Executive advised the 2011 Staff Survey had been completed and feedback received.

He confirmed that a presentation would be given to the next Finance Committee and a strategy for improvement would be drafted to address the challenges ahead.

The Vice Chair asked that the strategy, once issued to the Finance Committee come forward to the Council for further consideration.

11 Date of next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 22 June 2011 at 10.00 am.

A schedule of meetings for 2011/12 would be circulated to members once finalised.