

## CCEA

### COUNCIL MEETING

**Minutes of the one hundred and fifty seventh Council meeting held Thursday 26 January 2023 via MS Team and in-person (room 115 CCEA HQ)  
1.30pm – 3.30pm**

#### **Present:**

Mr T O'Reilly (Chair)	Mrs P Leitch (CM)
Dr L Caul (CM)	Mrs A Kingsley (CM)
Mr B Wilson (CM)	Ms M Corrigan (CM)
Prof. P Hanna (CM)	Mrs C Fitzsimons (CM)
Mr H McCarthy (CM)	Mrs D O'Connor (CM)
Mr Tony Stevens (NVCM)	Mr Colin Coffey (NVCM)
Mr N Wardlow (Apprentice)	Mrs Kathleen O'Hare (CM)

Mrs L Scott (Interim Chief Executive Officer: ICEO)  
Ms A Swann (Temporary Director of Education TDoE)  
Mr J Daly (Temporary Director of Finance & Corporate Services TDoFCS)  
Mrs Corinne Latham (Temporary Director of Curriculum and Assessment (TDoCA)  
Mrs S King (Head of Regulation HoR)

Mr Ray Caldwell (DE Observer)

Ms Jacqui Burns (Temporary Manager, Council Secretariat)

### **MINUTES**

The Chair welcomed Council Members and Senior CCEA Management Team to the meeting.

#### **1. Apologies:**

##### **Apologies were received from:**

Mr Rob Smyth and Mrs Patricia Slevin

#### **2. Conflict of Interests**

There were no conflicts of interest declared at this meeting.

#### **3. Chairs Business**

The Chair informed Council that Ms Majella Corrigan had regretfully formally submitted her resignation from Council effective of 28 February 2023. The Chair wished to record his appreciation to Majella for her work on Council over the past two years.

The Chair welcomed Mrs Corinne Latham who would be formally joining CCEA as the Temporary Director of Curriculum and Assessment for a one-year period from 1 February 2023.

The Chair updated Council Members on the Governance, Accountability Review (GAR) meeting on 30 November 2022. The Chair informed members that there had been a discussion regarding the 2022/2023 financial environment and the potential impact for the 2023/24 financial year following the budget announcement by the Secretary of State. There were also discussions around Fair Start, Irish Medium, lost learning due to COVID as well as the CCEA Business Plan and Corporate Plan.

The Chair confirmed that no governance and accountability issues were raised by either the Department or CCEA.

#### **4. Ratification of Council Minutes**

The minutes of the Council meeting on 16 December 2023 were ratified by Council Members.

**Proposer: Hugh McCarthy**

**Secunder: Majella Corrigan**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 November 2022 were ratified by Council Members.

**Proposer: Anne Kingsley**

**Secunder: Kathleen O'Hare**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 23 June 2022 were ratified by Council Members.

**Proposer: Carol Fitzsimons**

**Secunder: Hugh McCarthy**

#### **5. Interim Chief Executive Officer Verbal Update**

The ICEO provided a detailed verbal update on the workings of each department.

Council Members debated issues regarding a 2022 Ofsted assessment regarding lost learning as well as issues around underachievement and the negative effect that COVID has had on learners' development. The TDoE confirmed that when a principal was unable to attend a principal briefings meeting they would be invited to a summary briefing at a later date.

#### **6. Finance**

The Chair of Finance Committee provided a verbal update on the Finance Committee meeting that took place on 08 December 2022. He said that the key item was the letter received from the Permanent Secretary regarding emerging pressures, which was received after the Budget Review had taken place in October. Committee members had previously been asked to approve the following:

1. Review and formally approve the return of an easement of £488k from General Revenue Budget to the Department.
2. Review and formally approve the return of an easement of £32k from Earmarked Allocations to the Department.

These were approved on 20 January 2023.

The Chair of Finance Committee also commended to Council Members the Estates and Peoples Strategies which were approved at the Finance Committee meeting.

## Finance Report – October 2022

C/157/1a

The TDoFCS reported that in October CCEA had a projected underspend of £755k (5.5%) against allocated DE revenue, split by stream as follows:

- General recurrent baseline £711k underspend
- Earmarked funding £47k underspend
- Earned income £3k shortfall, equivalent to a small overspend.

## Finance Report – December 2022

C/157/1b

The TDoFCS reported that the draft December 2022 budget position had a projected underspend of £238k (1.5%) as follows:

- General recurrent baseline £211k underspend.
- Earmarked funding £30k underspend; and
- Earned income £3k shortfall, equivalent to a small overspend.

The Chair asked for a total amount of the funding that had been returned to the Department. The TDoFCS confirmed that this was £1million, plus the £488K and £32K returned as easements (requested by the Permanent Secretary).

## DE Budget 2023/2024 Information Gathering Exercise

C/157/2

The TDoFCS updated Council on an urgent budget review commissioned by the Department..

He confirmed that CCEA had provided a response, which set out that all CCEA activities were deemed statutory. He reported that 70% of CCEA's expenditure is people related and that inescapable pressures will continue to have an impact. These include pay, energy, and general purchases increase.

The Chair asked members to approve the DE Budget 2023/2024 Information Gathering Exercise. This was agreed.

**Proposer: Brian Wilson**

**Seconder: Philip Hanna**

## 7. Audit

The Chair invited Ms. Majella Corrigan to provide a verbal update on the ARAC meeting that took place on 19 January 2023. Ms Corrigan informed members that the timetable had been received for the Annual Report and Accounts and that the Annual Governance Statement was expected to be ready at the end of April.

There were no changes made to the risk ratings of the Corporate Risk Register and The ICEO confirmed work was on-going to refine the Risk Management Framework.

She explained that the framework was designed to provide a high-level assurance to Council and explained that it was an ecosystem that the Business Assurance Team worked hard in joining up the operational risks to the Corporate Risk Register.

## **Corporate Risk Register**

**C/157/3**

The TDoFCS updated members on the Corporate Risk Register approved at the Audit and Risk Assurance meeting on 19 January 2023.

It was proposed that CR8 'Failure to effectively manage the Corporate Governance and management arrangements in CCEA' which is owned by CCEA Council had its residual score reduced from twelve to eight.

The Chair asked members for their approval of the Corporate Risk Register. This was approved.

***Proposer: Les Caul***

***Secunder: Brian Wilson***

## **8. Education**

### **Awarding Body Implementation of Summer 2023 Arrangements**

**C/157/4**

The Chair invited the TDoE to update the members on grade boundaries to support the return to pre-COVID arrangements in 2024. She explained that the expectations for 2023 are that grades will be above 2019 and below 2022.

The Chair reminded members that the examinations teams were required to develop innovative solutions without knowing the outcomes from the examinations. Members discussed the journey that CCEA would take to return to pre-pandemic examinations as well as the importance of remaining aligned with the three-country agreement between England and Wales.

The Chair suggested Council meet at a 'briefing session' on 23 February for an update on progress.

## **9. Regulation**

### **Regulation Annual Report**

**C/157/5**

The Chair invited the Head of Regulation (HoR) to present the final draft of the Regulation Annual Report for 2022. The HoR explained that the Department for the Economy (DfE) commissioned this biannual report which highlighted the work that CCEA Regulation carry out in relation to Vocational and Technical Qualifications supported by DfE.

The Chair asked members to approve release of the report and member agreed.

***Proposed by: Les Caul***

***Secundered by: Paula Leitch***

### **Summer 2023 Regulatory Approach to Maintain Agreed Standards**

**C/157/6**

The HoR updated members on the current position and planned activities that are in relation to 2023 grading. Members asked that this be presented at the Council Briefing on 23 February alongside planning and issues relation to the AO.

## **10. Any Other Business**

The Chair referred to three pieces of correspondence for noting.

### **Item 1: Public Accountability and Governance Training for Members**

The Chair invited any member who had not already attended this course to contact the Council Secretariat who would arrange.

### **Item 2: PSCF Correspondence to Denis McMahon, Permanent Secretary**

For noting.

### **Item 3: DRAFT Business Plan 2023/2024**

The Chair advised that the draft Business Plan would go to the Department for comment and the education objectives for next year would go to the next meeting of the Education Committee.

## **11. Date of Next Meetings:**

Thursday 30 March 2023 at 10am

Thursday 25 May at 3pm

## **Addendum to the Minutes : 26 January 2023**

Following discussion at the Council meeting on 30 March 2023, a Council member asked that reference be made to updates being provided on Education and Regulatory matters at the 26 January 2023 meeting.

Subject to this addendum the minutes were ratified.