



### *Findings of Independent Report on Maths Error*

The Interim Chief Executive reported that DE requested an independent review be carried out on the suitability/appropriateness of a question in a GCE Mathematics paper (Summer Series 2011).

He advised that the report had identified issues which require further consideration.

Members would be updated at a future meeting.

### **3 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 December 2011**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 December 2011 were proposed by Mr Jim Clarke and seconded by Mr David Thompson as a true and accurate record. A copy was signed by the Acting Chair.

#### *Action Points*

Members were updated on the following :

*Appointment of Chair and New Members* : The Vice-Chair confirmed that she had sought further clarification at the Accountability Meeting on 10 January. A decision has not yet been made.

The Vice-Chair, once again, placed on record her thanks to Council members for continuing to contribute to and support the work of the organisation.

*Business Case approvals* : This issue was also raised at the GAR Meeting. The DoES advised that he had met with DE to seek clarity on a range of issues. This was ongoing.

Members agreed it was important to have complete clarity on the issues raised by officers and Finance Committee.

The Chairman of the Finance Committee asked for an update on progress to be reported at the next committee meeting (20 March 2012).

*Industrial Action* : The DoES confirmed that one union had relaxed its position and teachers were now engaging with the training. As a result of this additional events were being re-scheduled. However, there is limited capacity to do this. DE has been informed. A Council member sought clarification on whether there would be any financial implications. It was confirmed that should teacher substitution be required, this will have an impact on the year end position.

The Interim Chief Executive confirmed that the current situation was challenging. This will be monitored closely towards year end.

Members noted the remaining action points were completed.

### **8 Education**

#### ***Education Committee Report : 8 February 2012***

The Chair of the Committee updated members on the main issues discussed at the meeting. These were:

- The new specifications for the Entitlement Framework
- Special Education Needs qualifications provision
- Computer Based Assessment : literacy and numeracy in primary schools
- Assessment of Cross-Curricular Skills

The minutes would be issued to members following this meeting.

### ***The Future of CCEA Qualifications in England***

**C/99/4**

The DoQ drew members' attention to paper **C/99/4**. Members discussed the proposal to discontinue offering CCEA qualifications in England.

It was agreed that :

- CCEA's qualifications have to be equally valuable as (and equivalent to) those taken in England.

The Interim Chief Executive stated that this would be demonstrated in quality and standard of specifications and managed carefully over the next few years.

- Further clarity required on OfQual's role in relation to Northern Ireland qualifications.

It was agreed that further discussions were required and outcomes reported back as appropriate.

Members agreed with the proposal that CCEA should discontinue offering its qualifications in England.

## **9 Regulation**

The Acting Chairperson welcomed Mrs Fiona Pethick, Director of Qualifications and her colleague Mr Chris Harvey from OfQual to the meeting.

### ***Presentation from OfQual***

The Director of Qualifications (OfQual) gave a detailed presentation on regulation and OfQual's role as the governing body. She gave an overview of:

- OfQual's Role
- The changes to regulation
- Expectations, assurances and compliance with conditions
- General Conditions of Recognition

It was confirmed that CCEA will be required to complete a statement of compliance with the general conditions of recognition and a self-evaluation summary for submission to OfQual.

Members sought clarification and discussed a range of issues.

The Acting Chairperson, on behalf of Council, thanked Mrs Pethick for an informative and useful discussion.

### ***Future of Regulation***

**C/99/5**

The Regulation and Accreditation Manager gave a presentation on the nature and scope of future regulation. Members noted that a formal consultation would take place and Council's views would be sought on CCEA's response.

Members noted paper **C/99/5** which provided detailed information on four proposed models of regulation.

Following discussion members agreed that further information was required before a decision could be taken on the proposed models of regulation. They asked for the following be taken into consideration:

- The type of regulation which best serves the Northern Ireland market and increases the perception of comparability;
- The importance of ensuring that qualifications awarded in Northern Ireland are comparable to those awarded in England;
- The Northern Ireland Curriculum should meet the needs of our young people;
- Qualifications system should be comparable with the rest of the United Kingdom.
- The relationship with OfQual needs to be maintained.

Members agreed that the comparability issues required further debate and asked that this be brought back to a future meeting of the Council for discussion.

#### *CCEA Qualifications in England*

A Council member asked that the notification of CCEA's decision to withdraw from the English market be communicated carefully. The Interim Chief Executive agreed.

## **4 Correspondence**

Members noted the items of correspondence in relation to :

- Membership of Audit Committees; and
- Classification of Qualifications within the Entitlement Framework – Regulatory side.

## **5 Governance and Accountability**

### *GAR Minutes : 10 January 2012*

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2012 were tabled for members' information.

The DoQ reported a successful January 2012 examination series with 107 papers delivered error free.

Members commended this performance.

### *Next GAR Meeting*

The next Governance and Accountability meeting was scheduled for 27 March 2012.

### *Draft Management Statement and Financial Memorandum*

The Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) updated members on the process underway to revise the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum. He confirmed that the draft had been discussed at Finance Committee on 25 January and has been reviewed by the top management team.

A revised document will be presented to Finance Committee at its next meeting and to DE for consideration. Following this a final document will be presented to Council for consideration and approval.

A Council member sought clarification on whether CCEA's mission statement should also be revised. The Interim Chief Executive said this would be considered.

## **6 Finance and Planning**

### ***Finance Committee Report : 25 January 2012***

As Mr Jim Collins (Chairman of the Committee) had not been present at the meeting, Mrs Helen McClenaghan, drew members attention to the minutes provided and reported on the following :

- Finance Report as at 31 December 2011. Members discussed in detail the finance report and fulfilled its scrutiny function.
- January monitoring round : a further net easement of £810K was identified, giving a total of £2.76M released back to DE year to date.
- Business Case Process : members continued to express their concern at the length of time taken for approvals and have asked for clarification from DE on ownership and detail required.
- Business Case Approvals : 5 business cases approved by the Committee.

The committee also received an update on the Voluntary Severance Scheme, revised Consultancy Guidance and a briefing on FOCUS : CCEA's customer contact management scheme.

### ***Finance Report as at 31 January 2012***

The Finance Manager reported an overall underspend of £389K at this time: £126K – Baseline; and £197K – Projects. He confirmed that the capital plan was slightly behind, but would be brought back on target by year end.

The January figures reflect a hand back of £810K as part of the January monitoring round. DE has been informed. Members noted that this position was outside of CCEA's control.

### ***Statement of Financial Control as at 31 January 2012***

Members were content with the information provided.

## **7 Audit**

### ***Audit and Risk Committee Report : 18 January 2012***

Mrs O'Farrell, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee drew members' attention to the minutes provided. She advised that two new standing items had been placed on the agenda

- Conflict of Interests; and
- Training and Development of Members.

Two members have attended training courses and found these excellent in content and accessibility to A&R issues.

She reported on the following :

- A&R Self-Assessment : the exercise has been completed and an improvement action plan approved by the committee. This will continue to be a Standing Item on the agenda.
- Non-Compliance : members reviewed information for October and November 2011. No issues of concern were reported.
- Single Tender Actions : an update on general purchases and external venues was given. It was confirmed that revised guidance had been received on STAs.
- Regulation : Conditions of Recognition : a presentation was given on Regulation across the UK. It was confirmed that CCEA is required to submit a Statement of Compliance to OfQual. The committee would consider the conditions of recognition at its next meeting.
- Corporate Risk Register : all corporate risks have been reviewed and revised to reflect DE's revised risk and framework. CCEA's register and framework will be revised at Corporate level.
- Internal Audit Activity : an update was received on the QPP review. The review of PSE resulted in a 'satisfactory' rating.
- OfQual report on investigation into examination errors and action plan : it was agreed that all associated reports be integrated into one document : report; findings and action plan.
- OfQual statistics : The Statistical Bulletin on GCSE/GCE Examinations will be issued to the committee on an annual basis.
- NIAO Update : the NIAO representative confirmed that CCEA's expenditure in relation to commercial insurance was unlikely to result in a qualification in the accounts. External Audit Strategy : presented at the next meeting.
- DE Update : the DE observer was content that the self-assessment exercise had been completed and confirmed that DE were currently conducting the required 5-year external quality review of IA with ASM and Business Assurance.

Members were content with the information provided.

## **10 Any Other Business**

None identified.

## 11 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was confirmed as **Wednesday 16 May 2012 at 10.00 am.**

The Acting Chairperson thanked members and officers for their contributions to the meeting.

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Chairperson

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Date