



MINUTE of the meeting of the Eleventh General Teaching Council for Scotland held in Clerwood House, 96 Clermiston Road, Edinburgh, on Wednesday 4 March 2009 at 10.30 am.

- Present:** Ms Ferries (Convener)
 Ms Ballinger, Dr Bamber, Mrs Barnett, Mr Borowski, Mr Boyle, Mrs Bryce-Stafford, Mr Burnett, Mr Cassidy, Mrs Devaney, Mr Devine, Ms Fisher-Dougan, Mr Forbes, Mrs Fyfe, Mr Gorrie, Mrs Gray, Mr Hyslop, Mr Jackson, Mrs Kydd, Mr Loughran, Mr Malloch, Mr McTaggart, Mr Minty, Mrs O’Kane, Mr Paterson, Ms Prior, Miss Quinn, Mrs Sischy, Professor Smith, Mrs M Smith, Mrs M C H Smith, Mr Thewliss, Ms Wilson
- Assessor:** Mr Michael Kellet, Scottish Government
 Mr David Roy, Scottish Government
- Observer:** Mrs Anne McGachey HMIE
- In Attendance:** Mr Finn, Mrs Barker, Mr Hamilton, Miss Hunter, Mr Scott, Mr Adams, Mr Anderson, Mrs McAra, Mr Matheson, Mrs Murray, Miss Dobie, Mr Paxton, Mrs Fairweather (Casework Officer – Staff Observer).

1 Opening of Meeting

The Convener welcomed members to the meeting.

2 Sederunt and Apologies for Absence

The sederunt list was checked. Apologies for absence had been received from Mr Anderson, Dr Bodys HMCI, Ms Borthwick (Head of Communications), Professor Conroy, Mr Ford, Mr Gotts, Mr Gunstone (Scottish Government), Mr Kirk, Mr McGrath, Mrs Macaslan, Mr MacKay, Mr Maguire, Mr Milne, Professor Munn and Mrs Strong.

Members noted that apologies had also been tendered by the General Teaching for Northern Ireland.

3 Announcements

(a) Welcome

The Convener welcomed:

- (i) Ms Judy Moorhouse, Chairperson, the General Teaching Council for England, and Ms Jacquie Turnbull, Deputy Chairperson, the General Teaching Council for Wales, to the meeting;
- (ii) Mrs Frances Fyfe to her first meeting of Council. Mrs Fyfe had been co-opted to the membership of Council to replace Mr Michael Ross in the Primary/Nursery elected member category.

(b)/...

(b) Congratulations

- (i) On behalf of Council the Convener extended congratulations to Mrs Judith Sischy on her award of an OBE in the New Year Honours List for services to education and to the voluntary sector.
- (ii) Members noted that Matthew M MacIver, former Chief Executive/Registrar of GTC Scotland, had been awarded the CBE in the New Years Honours List for his services to Scottish Education. He had been pictured on the front cover of the Rudhach Magazine with wife Katrina, daughter Elizabeth and son Niall outside Buckingham Palace following the receipt of his CBE.

(c) Electronic Access to Council and Committee Papers

The Convener reminded members of the newly implemented workspace portal which had been set up to allow members to download Council and Committee papers electronically. Members were asked to try using the workspace portal and contact the Council Administrator with any feedback or problems experienced with the system.

4 Intimation of Any Other Competent Business

There were no items of other competent business.

5 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

6 Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 10 December 2008 (11Co(08)Min13)

The Minute was approved.

7 Business Arising from Minute (11Co(08)Min13)

There was no business arising from the Minute.

8 Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive gave an oral report to Council. In so doing, he highlighted a number of issues relating to:

- (a) the expected launch by the Scottish Government of its consultation documentation on the future of GTC Scotland around early April. This would lead to a twelve week consultation period to the summer, with a likely statement from the Government on its future plans for the Council in September 2009.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning had been very positive in her discussions with the Chief Executive, stressing her confidence in GTC Scotland and her wish to work in partnership with the Council. Indeed civil servants had worked well with the Council in preparing the first draft of the consultation paper. The Chief Executive hoped that the final document would reflect the professional trust, credibility and reliability which had characterised GTC Scotland over the past 44 years.

At the end of the Council meeting, Council members would have an opportunity to consider the next steps appropriate for GTC Scotland in the independence process. The

resulting views would then be considered by the Sub-Group on Independence set up by the Policy and Strategy Committee, and by the Policy and Strategy Group itself;

- (b) preparations for the election of registered teachers to a new Council in 2009 which were well advanced. The Chief Executive encouraged all members and stakeholders to promote the election to the profession;
- (c) the major focus on teacher professionalism provided by GTC Scotland which was likely to continue and grow in intensity. In this regard the Chief Executive had had constructive discussions on the role and responsibilities of GTC Scotland with stakeholders including the universities, the other General Teaching Councils in the United Kingdom, Learning and Teaching Scotland, and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE). This had included discussion with Her Majesty's Senior Chief Inspector of Education to explore some areas in which the Council's developing agenda could support and influence that of HMIE, particularly in terms of improving Scottish Education and developing a meaningful programme of leadership;
- (d) the high level of credibility of GTC Scotland on the world stage, as it continued to welcome visitors from Botswana and Scandinavia;
- (e) GTC Scotland's financial position which remained in line with budget, and the ongoing careful stewardship of its resources, for which the Director of Finance and Administration and his team were to be commended;
- (f) the successful merger of the Council's Probation and Continuing Professional Development teams to form a Professional Learning Development Department which was beginning to show good progress;
- (g) proposed follow-up at the May 2009 meeting of the Education Committee on the report on Teacher Professionalism commissioned by the Council and focus on the report at the National Education Conference scheduled for 28 May which had already attracted over 100 delegates;
- (h) steps being taken by GTC Scotland to declutter processes and address certain barriers to progress visited on the Council by the legal system, with a view to improving the way in which the Council was able to conduct its business;
- (i) in response to a request from the Council, an invitation from the Scottish Government to the Chief Executive to serve on the Curriculum for Excellence (ACfE) Management Board. The Council would also participate in the ACfE Implementation Group;
- (j) how, whilst retaining its regulatory function, GTC Scotland had become a key professional body in Scotland whose work was of major significance for all who work and learn in schools, and the ways in which, with members' help and positive direction from Government, the Council would become even more important in the future.

9 Minutes of Committees

(a) Appeals Board:

(i) Of 18 November 2008 (11AB(08)Min18)

Ms Fisher-Dougan presented this Minute on a formal basis. Minute Items 6, 7 and 8 were considered in the absence of the press.

The Minute was received, with approval of an amendment to Item 7 (xxviii).

(ii)/...

(ii) Of 2 February 2009 (11AB(09)Min19)

Ms Fisher-Dougan presented this Minute, of which Items 6 and 7 were considered in the absence of the press. Ms Fisher-Dougan drew members' attention to the following item:

Item 8 - Review of Standing Orders of Appeals Board

Members approved a number of amendments to the Standing Orders of the Appeals Board (attached to the Appeals Board Minute as an Appendix) in accordance with legal advice received clarifying the role and function of the Appeals Board and following a number of issues raised in discussions of the Board relating to recent cases.

One member had a query relating to an area of the Standing Orders of the Appeals Board which was not currently the subject of revision, and it was agreed that it would be appropriate to address this outwith the meeting.

This Minute was received.

(b) Exceptional Admission to the Register of 11 December 2008 (11EAR(08)Min18)

The Convener presented the Minute and drew members' attention to the following:

Item 2 – EAR Policies Paper

The Committee on Exceptional Admission to the Register was currently reviewing a number of policy areas and hoped to report to the June 2009 meeting of Council on this.

This Minute was received.

(c) Policy and Strategy of 17 January 2009 (11PS(09)Min17)

Ms Ferries presented this Minute and focused on a number of matters:

Item 6 – Future Status of GTC Scotland

Members noted that a summary of the Council's informal group discussions on issues relating to GTC Scotland independent status following the December Council 2008 meeting had been submitted to the January 2009 Policy and Strategy Committee meeting. The Committee had agreed to set up a small member/officer Sub-Group to consider key issues relating to the Council's future independent status as they arose and report to the Committee and then to Council as appropriate. This cycle of discussions had informed the framing of questions for the informal Council group discussions to take place after the March Council meeting.

In this regard members approved a paper on GTC Scotland independence, which had been prepared by the Chief Executive and approved at the January 2009 Policy and Strategy Committee meeting, setting out a number of key issues and priorities to be taken forward by the Council in terms of GTC Scotland's transition to independent status and the future in general (attached, together with a summary of the informal Council group discussions after the December 2008 Council meeting, to the Policy and Strategy Committee Minute as Appendix I).

With/...

With the publication of the Scottish Government's consultation paper anticipated around the beginning of April, it had been agreed that the date of 21 April 2009 originally scheduled for the next Policy and Strategy Committee meeting should now be set aside for a meeting of the Sub-Group. The Sub-Group would prepare a submission for consideration by the Policy and Strategy Committee, a meeting of which would now be rescheduled for May 2009. Three possible alternative meeting dates would therefore be circulated to Policy and Strategy Committee members today. The Policy and Strategy Committee would formulate a draft response to be presented to the June Council meeting.

Item 7 – Strategic and Annual Plans – April 2009 onwards

Members approved the following documents:

- (i) Revised Draft Strategic Plan 2009–2013 which adopted an outcome based approach (attached to the Policy and Strategy Committee Minute as Appendix II);
- (ii) Mid-Year-Review of the 2008 -2009 Annual Plan (attached to the Policy and Strategy Committee Minute as Appendix III).

In accordance with a request from Government, the Draft Strategic Plan 2009-2013 would be submitted to the Scottish Government by 31 March 2009.

It was also noted that further work would be undertaken with a view to producing a shorter version of strategic planning papers to the Policy and Strategy Committee and to the Council in future years.

Item 9 – Election of Registered Teachers

The Policy and Strategy Committee had approved a marketing and promotion strategy which sought to promote the work of the Council among the teaching profession and to encourage registered teachers to stand for election and vote in the election. The Scottish Ministers had yet to determine how long the Twelfth Council's term of office would be, but current thinking suggested a possible term of around two years. .

Item 14 – Chartered Teacher Programme Review

Members were advised that the Draft Standard for Chartered Teacher was now at the consultation stage and that the final draft version would be presented to the Professional Standards Committee and then to Council.

The Convener informed members that a recent meeting had taken place between GTC Scotland and Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) representatives to clarify the roles of the two bodies and overlap of areas of interest, including the Chartered Teacher Programme. As a result work was to be undertaken to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding to clarify the work of and interface between the two bodies.

The Minute was received.

(d) Professional Conduct of 5 February 2009 (11PCC(09)Min17)

At the invitation of the Convener, Mrs Devaney presented the Minute, Item of 9 of which was considered in private session.

Reference was made to the following items:

- (i) Item 5 – Draft Skills and Knowledge Framework for the Investigating Sub-Committee, and Disciplinary Sub-Committee;
- (ii) Item 6 – Monitoring of Conditional Registration Orders and Reprimands
- (iii) Item 7/...

- (iii) Item 7 – Guidance and Precedent Framework for Investigating Sub-Committee and Disciplinary Sub-Committee;
- (iv) Item 10 – De-cluttering of Processes;
- (v) Item 12 – Public Complaints Process.

Members noted that work was ongoing in relation to the above. In relation to Item 7 the need to ensure a balance between consistency in decision-making by the Investigating and Disciplinary Sub-Committees and the need to consider individual cases on their own merits was noted. Once the Committee was in a position to formalise its conclusions, these would be presented to Council in due course.

Item 15 – Overseas Criminal Record Checks

Members noted that following discussion, the Professional Conduct Committee had agreed to maintain the status quo in terms of GTC Scotland requiring overseas criminal record checks from applicants for registration who had been outside the United Kingdom for a continuous period of 3 months or more. The Committee had taken the view that extending the timescale to 12 months would reduce the robustness of current procedures.

Item 16 – Temporary Suspension Protocol

Members approved a Temporary Suspension Protocol (attached to the Professional Conduct Committee Minute as an Appendix) setting out the basis on which a hearing would be arranged by the Council's Investigating Sub-Committee to consider the possibility of a Temporary Suspension Order in cases involving instances of serious conviction and misconduct where it was considered that a person should not be working in a classroom.

The Minute was received.

(e) Education of 10 February 2009 (11Educ(09)Min13)

Professor Smith presented this Minute and drew members' attention to the following items:

Item 1 – Early Years Workforce Qualifications and Early Years Teaching Degrees

Anne Hughes from the University of Strathclyde had given a presentation to the Education Committee on the BA Childhood Practice, Early Years Workforce Qualifications and Early Years Teaching Degrees.

Against the background of ongoing developments relating to the registration and qualifications of different levels of staff in the early years sector up to Manager/Lead Practitioner and the links between the Standard for Childhood Practice and the Standard for Initial Teacher Education, it was agreed that consideration of the role and qualifications of registered teachers in the early years sector should continue to be a key agenda item for the Education Committee and the Council.

In addition, it was noted that GTC Scotland would participate in the following:

- (i) development of a common values statement for the early years workforce to be led by the Scottish Government;
- (ii) the provision of educational development for possible future joint roles across health, education and social services, to be taken forward by the Scottish Government, the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the National Health Service Education Scotland.

Item 4/...

Item 4 – A Curriculum for Excellence (ACfE): Management Board

The Chief Executive had now been invited to join the ACfE Management Board.

The Chief Executive reported that he had attended his first meeting of the ACfE Management Board. Discussion at Board meetings remained confidential; however, the Chief Executive encouraged members to access the Board's papers which were published on the website following approval by the Board. The meeting had been chaired by Colin McLean, Director of the Teachers Division, Scottish Government; a number of key stakeholders from trade unions and the wider education community had been present, and the meeting had been well run and clearly focused. The Chief Executive emphasised the importance of the Council being represented and influencing discussion and indicated that he would report back on relevant issues to the May 2009 Education Committee meeting.

GTC Scotland would also participate in the ACfE Implementation Group being formed by the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland.

Item 5(a) – Teaching Qualification Further Education (TQFE)

In terms of the possibility of the removal of subject specificity within the TQFE, following discussions between GTC Scotland, the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) and Scottish Government representatives, the Government was currently considering a request to provide robust guidance to the Colleges to maintain adequate safeguards on the appropriate deployment of staff.

Item 5(b) – Strategy to Encourage Registration in Further Education

The Chief Executive would be meeting with the new Chief Executive of the Association of Scotland's Colleges in due course to discuss relevant matters, including a strategy to encourage registration in further education.

The Minute was received.

(f) Finance and General Purposes of 10 February 2009 (11FGP(09)Min13)

Mr Boyle presented this Minute and highlighted the following:

Item 4(b) – Council Budget for the Year to 31 March 2010

Mr Boyle reported that the Director of Finance and Administration and his team had kept the budget on target. In the context of GTC Scotland's strong and stable financial position, Council members endorsed a recommendation from the Finance and General Purposes Committee that there should be no change in fee levels for 2009/2010. In this regard members noted that, in order to ensure that reserves remained within the approved Reserves policy, the three year projection indicated that the registration fee would require to increase to £45 (currently £40) in 2010/2011. However in the meantime the position would be kept under review.

Item 4(c) – Investments

Members noted that there had been a drop in the value of the Council's investments since March 2008, due to the current financial climate, but that these had recovered since the previous report to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The Minute was received.

(g)/...

(g) Professional Standards Committee of 18 February 2009 (11PSTD(09)Min13)

At the invitation of the Convener, Mrs Barnett presented this Minute. Members noted that, due to bad weather conditions, the meeting originally scheduled to take place on 3 February 2009 had been postponed to 18 February 2009.

Mrs Barnett referred to the following:

Item 3 (b) – *Teacher Induction Scheme: Funding of Extensions and First Meeting of the Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) Ongoing Review Group*

- (i) Further correspondence from the Scottish Government confirming that extensions for provisionally registered teachers were no longer directly funded raised a concern that this might undermine the Teacher Induction Scheme. This would be revisited at the next Local Authority/Induction Managers' training day.
- (ii) The Professional Standards Committee had received a report of discussion at the first meeting of the Teacher Induction Scheme Ongoing Review Group. Disappointment had been expressed at the lack of representation from either ADES or COSLA. However Mr Kellet, for the Scottish Government, reported that representatives from ADES and COSLA were expected to be present at the next meeting.

Item 3(d) – *Developing the Probationary Service of Scottish Teachers – The Alternative Route*

Members noted that:

- (i) work on the compilation of responses from focus groups was nearing completion;
- (ii) the Educational Planning and Research Officer had recently attended a Refugee into Teaching in Scotland (RITeS) seminar, at which delegates had shared their experiences of the Alternative Route. The key message had been that the Council should seek to endeavour to continue to raise issues relating to and provide as much guidance and support as possible for those on the Alternative Route;
- (iii) GTC Scotland website information on the Alternative Route would continue to be updated;
- (iv) an analysis of statistics for those on the Alternative Route who were not fully registered was currently being undertaken.

Item 3(e) – *Draft Policy relating to Deferral Requests Prior to and Following Commencement of the Teacher Induction Scheme*

Members expressed support for the revised document but requested that the framework for appeals be reviewed.

Item 4(a) – *University of Aberdeen Developments – Secondary to Primary*

The Convener intimated that the University of Aberdeen's Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Learning and Development (Primary) had been recently accredited. This now represented an accredited programme which would enable teachers to move from secondary to primary education. While the Panel had had some concerns that the two Modules would be at Masters level, it was noted that the programme had been accredited with a condition to report back with an evaluation to the Council.

Item 4(b)/...

Item 4(b) – Future Accreditation Schedule

Following the recommendations of the National Review Group, the Chartered Teacher programmes would require to be reviewed and re-accredited. This would represent a heavy workload for the Professional Standards Panels. In this regard Programme Leaders had been invited to a meeting in March to discuss related matters.

Item 4(f) – Chartered Teacher Programme Review – Draft Standard for Chartered Teacher

The Convener intimated that the draft Standard for Chartered Teacher had been put out for consultation. Focus groups had been held and the responses and key issues highlighted. The final draft version of the Standard would be considered at the next Professional Standards Committee meeting and would then be submitted to the June Council meeting for approval.

Item 7 – Leadership and Management – Pilot Project Alternative Route to Standard for Headship

Following the publication of the evaluation report on the Pilot Project Alternative Route to the Standard for Headship, the programme had been rolled out to a further five local authorities and would be launched in April 2009 over a two-day event. All local authorities had been invited to nominate participants in the programme. It was noted that a number of issues and concerns were still to be addressed and a meeting had been requested with Mr Kellet, Scottish Government, to discuss the associated recommendations.

Item 8 – Standard or Programme for Leadership

Due to the number of Committee members unable to attend the rescheduled meeting of the Professional Standards Committee, it had been decided to set up a Sub-Group to consider a draft starter paper prepared by the Chief Executive on a Standard or Programme for Leadership. The Sub-Group would prepare a redrafted version of the paper for consideration at the Committee's May 2009 meeting.

Item 9 – 'New Teachers Centre' for Scotland

A watching brief was being kept on the 'New Teachers Centre' in California and how that impacted on matters in Scotland. The Professional Officer (Professional Learning Development) had received an invitation to attend a meeting on 12 March in relation to a planned visit to Scotland in June by Ellen Moir from California. A further report would be made to the next meeting of the Professional Standards Committee.

Item 12 – Framework for Professional Recognition

It was noted that the Sub-Group which had previously reviewed the Framework for Professional Recognition was to be reinstated for a single meeting to consider a number of issues relating to the Framework and its operation.

The Minute was received.

10 Council Membership

Members noted that:

- (a) Michael Ross, Council member in the Primary/Nursery category had resigned from Council following his retirement. The Chief Executive had previously written to Mr Ross, but was asked to send a further letter thanking him for his service to the General Teaching Council and wishing him a long and happy retirement on behalf of staff and Council members.
- (b) Following approval by the Policy and Strategy Committee to invite the runner up in the 2008/2009 co-option process to fill the Primary/Nursery Teacher vacancy, Mrs Frances J Fyfe, Primary Teacher at Cairn Primary School, Maybole, South Ayrshire, had accepted the invitation. Mrs Fyfe would serve on the Disciplinary Sub-Committee (including Panel A) and on the Education Committee, and as a reserve member of the Professional Standards Panels.

11 Correspondence

There were no items of correspondence to report.

12 Any Other Competent Business

There was no other competent business.

13 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of Council would be held in Clerwood House on Wednesday 3 June 2009 at the earlier time on 10.00 am, when the official Council photograph would be taken.