

Education and Lifelong Learning Committee

Note of Rapporteur Group Visit to the General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW)

Date: Monday 13 September 2004

Venue: GTCW offices, Southgate House, Cardiff

Rapporteur Group:

Peter Black AM (Committee Chair)

David Davies AM

Irene James AM

Janet Ryder AM

Holly Pembridge (Deputy Committee Clerk)

David Blair (Members' Research Service)

GTCW:

Gary Brace (Chief Executive)

Mal Davies (Chair)

1. Introduction

Peter Black introduced the members of the rapporteur group. He thanked GTCW for hosting the meeting, and explained that this was part of a series of such visits by Committee Members to education and training organisations in Wales. The purpose of this visit was to foster a greater understanding of the work of the Council; in particular the Corporate Plan 2004-07; objectives, challenges and achievements.

Mal Davies welcomed members of the Committee. Gary Brace then gave an overview of the status and

functions of the Council and then summarised the objectives of the Corporate Plan 2004-07.

2. Status

- The GTCW had moved from being fully funded (2000) to a final year of part funding by the Welsh Assembly Government (2003-2004). It was now self financing;
- The Cabinet Office definition of the GTCW was as a ‘professional, self-regulating body’;
- Teachers' registration fees funded core activities;
- The Council was made up of 25 members: 12 members elected by teachers; 9 appointed by the Assembly following nominations made by teacher unions and other organisations and 4 directly appointed by the Assembly.

3. Functions

Funded by teachers:

i.) Regulatory Functions

- Registering the teaching profession in Wales;
- Establishing professional codes of conduct for teachers; and
- Disciplinary functions.

ii.) Advisory Functions

- Standards of teaching and conduct;
- Role of profession
- Recruitment, retention and supply of teachers;
- Training, CPD and performance management; and
- status and standards of profession.

iii.) Operational Functions

- Can engage in promoting teacher recruitment and promoting teachers' professional development at the request of the Assembly

Funded by the Welsh Assembly Government:

- Individually focussed Professional Development for teachers;
- The awarding of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS); and
- The awarding of induction certificates and hearing appeals.

4. The following issues were raised in discussion:

- David Davies asked why the Assembly Government directly appointed four members of the GTCW. Gary Brace said that a governmental influence on professional bodies was fairly commonplace across professional bodies. Mal Davies added that appointed candidates were subject to a rigorous public appointments selection process; and
- Janet Ryder asked if professional associations nominated members. Gary Brace said that the teaching unions and other nominating bodies, such as LEAs were listed in the Assembly GTCW Constitution Regulations. Amongst the nine nominations from organisations, the Assembly should seek to appoint four from the list of the teaching unions and five from the list of other education bodies. The elected teachers were in three categories: four head and deputy headteachers, four primary teachers and four secondary teachers. There was currently no distinction between primary and secondary heads and the GTCW would be requesting that Regulations be amended to ensure representation from both phases. The Assembly had run the first election in 2000 but the GTCW had run the 2004 election. This was currently being evaluated.

5. Corporate Plan 2004-07

Gary Brace outlined the key challenges and achievements under each objective.

Objective 1: to raise the status of teaching by maintaining and promoting the highest standards of professional practice and conduct

5.1 Key Achievements:

- From 2003, the GTCW was able to administer and award QTS;
- The GTCW had been successful in collecting teachers' registration fees, via collaboration with LEAs - this had not been as successful a process in England; and
- The publication of the Annual Statistical Digest in March 2004. There was unique data available on the Register including, the number of teachers in Wales able to teach through the medium of Welsh and ethnic background etc.

In answer to Members' questions, Gary Brace and Mal Davies made the following responses:

5.3 Register of Qualified Teachers in Wales

- Information on the number of teachers who qualified and then took up teaching posts would be available in the Annual Statistical Digest (2005);
- Welsh Assembly Government officials had found such data to be useful and had for example requested an age profile of headteachers in preparation for the introduction of the mandatory National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH); and

- The Register was a powerful data source at individual teacher level: it was likely that shortage areas would be able to be geographically mapped in the future.

5.4 Disciplinary Functions

- The GTCW was able to hear cases of alleged professional misconduct/professional incompetence against teachers;
- The outcome of cases could be seen on page 10 of the Annual Report 2003-04;
- The GTCW dealt with cases of alleged misconduct after a teacher had been dismissed by their employer (e.g. LEA); where a teacher had resigned to pre-empt a dismissal; or where a teacher had been convicted of a relevant offence;
- The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) had responsibility for dealing with cases involving the welfare and safety of children in England and Wales, however, in Scotland, the General Teaching Council had responsibility for this function.

5.5 Priorities under Objective One:

- Whether there should be other categories for registration - i.e. overseas teachers; student teachers; new teachers on induction etc;

Objective 2: to provide an independent, representative and authoritative voice for the profession on teaching issues; and

Objective 3: to develop a culture of professional development amongst teachers

5.6 Key Achievements:

- The production of the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Action Plan;
- Responses to consultations from the Welsh Assembly Government and National Assembly for Wales, on behalf of the teaching profession in Wales: including Daugherty Assessment Review, Foundation Phase and 14-19 Learning Pathways; and
- Developing a culture of professional development: the third phase of the continuing professional development pilots had been completed Teachers' individual needs were identified in the context of performance management.

In answer to Members' questions, Gary Brace made the following responses:

- The Council had stated that there was a need for a clear stream of funding to support Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to meet local needs;
- Performance Management was a key driver for monitoring CPD. The National Audit Office (NAO) was undertaking a value for money study on GEST/Better Schools Funding. Access to

individually focussed CPD was via the GTCW; and

- The GTCW was developing and would be consulting on a generic framework of professional milestones and standards. It would, of course, be at the discretion of schools to create/define posts.

5.7 Priorities under Objectives Two/Three:

- To ensure that all CPD funding is allocated for this year (GTCW had taken steps to ease the application process); would need to know if CPD funding from Assembly would be reinstated for April 2005 to plan appropriately;
- To assist teachers to disseminate their expertise/professional achievements; and
- To continue to develop a professional development framework - as yet no formal career structure for teachers. Need to establish a flexible path for teachers - with professional milestones/standards and professional recognition. This work would need to be carried out over the next 2-3 years.

Objective 4: to communicate the positive contribution of the teaching profession to society

5.8 Key Priorities

- To work with press and media to raise a positive profile for the teaching profession; and
- To host the GTCW's first Inaugural Lecture (October 2004).

Objective Five: to provide efficient, effective and robust finance, personnel and administrative systems that support the delivery of the Council's objectives

5.9 Key Priorities

- Ensure that the Council operates efficiently;
- Organise fair and impartial member elections; and
- Develop personnel policies in accordance with Investors in People (IiP) standards.

6. Discussion Session

The following issues were raised in discussion. Gary Brace and Mal Davies gave the following responses to Members' questions:

6.1 CPD

- Individually focussed CPD was currently available under project headings: i) Bursaries ii) Scholarships iii) Sabbaticals iv) Professional Networks;

- There had been a reduction in funding in 2004-05f - therefore the whole-staff initiatives scheme was not currently operating;
- Headteachers needed to approve staff CPD applications to GTCW in the context of performance management;
- 3188 teachers in Wales took up various individual bursaries in 2003-04. Over the three year period, 7055 teachers had benefitted from some form of individual CPD opportunity, a further 2653 teachers had been involved in networks and 8235 in whole staff initiatives (total: 18,033 teachers)
- Over the three year CPD pilot phase – the most popular subjects for individually focussed CPD were: early years; ICT; SEN; Science, English; Mathematics, English and Management Skills

6.2 Funding CPD

- The overall (EYF) budget of £5m for CPD in 2003-04 had diminished to £1.5m in 2004-05, which had been supplemented by a further £440k. Teachers had been reluctant to pursue CPD opportunities because of the (perceived) reduction in funding. The programme had been relaunched in September and uptake was on the increase.
- £5m was a realistic, reasonable level of funding to deliver the CPD programme in Wales. A three year budget line would also be desirable/realistic;
- If every teacher in Wales was granted £500 to undertake CPD money per year - £20m would guarantee that undertaking;
- The arrival of interactive whiteboards in schools had been a positive factor in teachers taking up CPD opportunities in ICT;
- Most of the teachers that had benefitted from CPD had been mainstream teachers, heads of department and curriculum leaders;
- There had been an 8-10% demand for CPD opportunities in SEN; 45% of applicants were in their first ten years of teaching, 25% who had taught for 20 years or more and 25% who had taught for thirty years or more;
- The pilots had been independently evaluated - Estyn had also advised the Assembly on the pilots;
- Individual Needs CPD was excellent value for money as it also met the needs of the classroom and was an excellent motivator of teachers

6.3 Disciplinary Function - Clwyd Report Recommendations

- The GTCW would be involved in a discipline/misconduct case where a teacher had been dismissed by the employer or a teacher had resigned to pre-empt dismissal. The GTCW was also a port of call for members of the public (other than the Police and/or employer) in terms of allegations of professional misconduct by a teacher. In such cases, senior officers in the GTCW would review the case of professional misconduct - if they deemed that the case did not involve misconduct, the case would finish at that point. If misconduct was an issue, an investigating committee of the GTCW would consider whether there was a case to answer. The teacher would be contacted to disclose his/her version of events. If the investigating committee considered there was a case to answer, a professional conduct committee, made up of different members would

hear the case, decide whether the teacher was guilty of professional misconduct and could impose one of four sanctions. The other teaching councils would be informed;

- The Clwyd Report had not recognised the disciplinary function/role of the GTCW ;
- It was not clear whether the proposal for four independent tribunals to be established would be particularly helpful/beneficial to teachers. Any new judicial body or tribunal would further complicate the process;
- It would be beneficial to have one organisation (i.e. the GTCW) to deal with all disciplinary cases including those involving child welfare and safety issues; and
- In contrast with the General Teaching Council for Scotland which already has such powers, legislation would be needed to undertake such disciplinary work.

6.4 Poor Performance/Incompetence

- If a teacher was dismissed for incompetence, the employer (LEA) would notify the GTCW directly;
- LEAs had improved with regard to sharing information. Not all headteachers, however, were good at dealing with poor performance. A culture shift was needed to address this - the Professional Code of Conduct (2001) and Performance Management would help address this; and
- The calibre of new teachers was outstanding - they were competent and motivated.

6.5 Shortage/Oversupply of Teachers

- There was no teacher recruitment crisis in Wales although there were shortages in certain secondary subjects in Wales; and
- Commonwealth heads of education had agreed not to 'poach' teachers from newly developed countries.

6.6 Recruitment and Retention of Teachers

- There was a need for further development of the system for bringing potential teachers to light. Taster courses/general observation placements existed and were beneficial and less wasteful;
- The General Teaching Council for Scotland and the Scottish Executive had a joint arrangement whereby every new teacher in Scotland was guaranteed a teaching post. This was done with collaboration from Scottish LEAs. The guarantee did not go beyond the first year but allowed the new teachers to complete induction. The GTCW would be receiving further details on the Scottish initiative;
- Course numbers for teacher training courses were based on figures derived from an annual modelling exercise undertaken by DfES. Wales would get a percentage but the current model did not include the unique inputs/data from Wales;
- The cross border flow of established qualified teachers was often exaggerated but, in initial training terms, Wales was training many teachers for England and training too many primary school teachers; and

- The GTCW would pass the ELL Committee details of the origins/domicile of those in teacher training in Wales.

6.7 Teacher Recruitment and Retention Action Plan/ELL Committee

- The GTCW was awaiting the Welsh Assembly Government's response to the action plan;
- The plan had recommended that the ELL Committee, " might wish to monitor the impact of the plan and produce a report outlining the impact of the plan after three years" [page 16]. The Chair suggested that the Welsh Assembly Government might monitor and report back to Committee or that the Council could report back to Committee, to enable Members to scrutinise the Welsh Assembly Government. The ELL Committee's party spokespersons would discuss this and refer to the ELL Committee.

6.8 Standards

- Schools and teachers had got better at preparing young people for examinations; and
- ICT literacy was strong, maybe to the detriment of basic skills.

6.9 Closing Remarks

The Chair asked representatives from the GTCW to summarise anything they wished the rapporteur group to convey to the ELL Committee and the Welsh Assembly Government. The following points were raised:

- Potential for the development of the Council's functions/responsibilities for disciplinary cases – legislation would be needed;
- CPD - continue with funding but on a three yearly basis to aid planning; and
- GTCW hoped to develop its thinking on different categories of registration i.e. provisional registration;

Action Points

ELL Committee to indicate to GTCW how it will engage with the monitoring of the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Action Plan; and

Gary Brace to provide rapporteur group with information: the origin of new recruits to teaching posts in Wales. [Link to this information:

<http://www.gtcw.org.uk/pdf/english/recruitment&retention.pdf>]

Relevant Documents:

Corporate Plan 2004-07

Annual Report and Accounts 2003-04