

Áine Lynch	Present
Ann Mulcahy	Present
Anne Howard	Present
Anne Loughnane	Present
Bryan O'Reilly	Present
Catherine Cross	Present
Catherine Doolan	Apologies
Catherine Moynihan	Present
Ciaran O'Donnell	Present
David O'Sullivan	Present
Declan Fahie	Present
Eamon Dennehy	Present
Eamonn Shaughnessy	Present
Fergal McCarthy	Present
Gerry Leydon	Present
Gráinne Conachy	Present
Jean Beswick Duignan	Present
Kathleen Burke	Apologies
Liam Ó Néill	Present
Mary Magner	Present
Mary Curley	Present
Michael Delargey	Present
Michelle Keane	Present
Niall Duddy	Present
Niamh Hourigan	Present
Niamh Dennehy	Present
Noel Cronin	Present
Paul Moroney	Present
Peter McCabe	Present
Rosena Jordan	Present
Séamus Ó Fearraigh	Present
Seán Ó hArgáin	Present
Seán Ó Dubhlaing	Present
Seán O'Neill	Present
Teresa O'Doherty	Apologies
Tracie Tobin	Present

Staff in attendance: Lynn Ramsey, Director; Phil Fox, Deputy Director; Harry McGeary, Head of Finance and IT; Finola O'Dwyer, Solicitor & Head of Professional Standards; Bríd Murphy, Head of Initial Teacher Education & Induction, Carmel Kearns, Head of Teachers' Learning and Research, Ruth Flynn Head of Corporate Affairs and Human Resources.

1. Attendance & Apologies

1.1. Opening Remarks by Chairperson

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

1.2. Noting of Apologies

Apologies were noted from Catherine Doolan, Kathleen Burke and Teresa O'Doherty.

1.3. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts declared.

2. Minutes & Matters Arising

2.1. Minutes

The minutes of meeting 11 December 2023 were approved **having been proposed by Niall Duddy and seconded by Seán Ó hArgáin.**

2.2. Matters Arising

Members raised the published article regarding the Teaching Council's legal representation referencing their work with the Council. The Director confirmed that permission had not been granted for the Teaching Council to be referenced and that the Director had two meetings with the legal representation regarding this and that apologies had been conveyed at these meetings.

3. Standing Item

3.1. Appointments to Committees & Panels

The Head of Corporate Affairs advised members that Catherine Cross has been appointed to the Investigating Committee at the recent Executive Committee meeting. There is no update in relation to the IBEC vacancy.

4. Directors Report

4.1. Update from Director

Brian Fahy, Communications Manager, joined the meeting for this section.

The Director's report was taken as read and the following points were noted by the Director,

- The Director advised members that the PCR is in the final stages and the report would be published once the Secretary General of the DoE has reviewed it.
- The Deputy Director provided an overview of a case referral to the ombudsman regarding an applicant for registration through the QA process who applied for vetting at the same time. The Ombudsman advised that the delay in the processing could have been better managed and communication from the Teaching Council could have improved the process for the applicant. The relevant SOPs have been updated and the QA and vetting processes will operate in tandem.
- The Head of Initial Teacher Education & Induction confirmed that Senior Counsel's Advice is being sought regarding the proportionality assessments in regard to the Amendment Regulation regarding induction, where a teacher has qualified outside of ROI/
- It was agreed that a list of abbreviations and acronyms would be made available in each report going forward.
- The Deputy Director outlined the 'Return-to-the Register' streamlined priority process which registered 75 teachers since the process began in January.
- The Communications Manager presented the decision made by the Executive Committee to consider alternative and more sustainable approaches to FÉILTE. The ensuing discussion noted the significant cost and staff resourcing needed for FÉILTE in its current form.

A discussion took place regarding Teacher Supply and the following points were noted:

- The DoE 'Signs of Life' survey is in the final stages and will be shared with Council when the final report is available. Data regarding the DoE 'Teaching Transforms' campaign will be made available at the next Council meeting.
- The Communications Manager confirmed that the marketing strategy for the 'Return to the Register' process included a social media campaign both in Gaeilge and English, a website update and linked-in with retired teachers.
- The Director confirmed that the vast majority of NQT's undertake the Droichead process immediately following registration.

5. Item for Decision

5.1. Governance Day Follow-Up (External Members potentially sitting on inquiry Panels)

The Deputy Director synthesised the discussions that have taken place to date at Executive Committee in May, September, November, February and at Council in July, October and December 2023. The challenges regarding scheduling for inquiries were acknowledged at the November 2023 Executive Committee and December 2023 Council Meeting.

The following points were noted in the ensuing discussion:

- Some Council Members noted that the scope of the decision before Council at today's meeting was too narrow and may lead to a small pool of Disciplinary Committee Members who have concluded their terms on Council being in a position to sit on fitness to teach inquiry panels. The view was put forward that if this amendment was enacted it may not be significant enough to alleviate the issues regarding scheduling of inquiries.
- The Deputy Director assured Council that appropriate training and supports would be provided to any future panel members.
- The Deputy Director confirmed that the Professional Standards team had reviewed

the potential impact of the IBEC vacancy on the scheduling of inquiries and determined that filling the vacancy would not have a significant impact on the scheduling difficulties related to inquiries.

The decision to seek an amendment to the legislation to allow former members of Disciplinary Committee remain available to participate in inquiries was **approved having been proposed by Seán Ó Neill, seconded by Tracie Tobin**

6. Items for Decision

6.1. Draft Annual Plan 2024

The Head of Corporate Affairs and HR outlined the Draft Action Plan for 2024 which was assembled by the SMT in-line with the strategic goals and with measurable KPI's.

The Annual Plan 2024 was **approved having been proposed by Mary Curley and seconded by Michael Delargey.**

7. Item for Decision

7.1. Draft Budget 2024

The Head of Finance and IT brought the Council through an overview of the draft budget for 2024.

The following points were noted in the ensuing discussion:

- Council had previously agreed to jointly fund the final development phase for the T-REX online platform with the NCCA. The DoE subsequently came on board as an additional funder, and this change to funding arrangements resulted in some delays in the signing of the contract. The contract was ultimately signed in October 2023, at which point the two-year final development phase commenced.
- The Deputy Director confirmed that despite increasing legal costs, costs are in line with other Irish regulators. An in-house legal model was considered as part of the organisational review however this would not reduce the cost.
- The Communications Manager confirmed that should the Council pursue internal employment for translation services, it still would not be possible for all translations to be completed in-house.
- Costs associated with any staffing recommendations from the organisational review are not included and will be considered when this report is before Council.
- The deficit was noted and a number of members acknowledged that a review of the schedule of fees will be required.
- The final cost of FÉILTE will be determined by the recommendations of the FÉILTE working group on the future format of FÉILTE.

The draft budget was **approved having been proposed by Michael Delargey and seconded by Bryan O'Reilly.**

8. Item for Noting -

8.1. Board Effectiveness Review

This item was deferred to the next council meeting, scheduled for 25 March.

9. Item for Decision

9.1. Protected Disclosure Policy (External)

The Head of Corporate Affairs and HR presented the Protected Disclosure External Policy which was **approved having been proposed by Anne Loughnane and seconded by Catherine Moynihan.**

9.2. Protected Disclosures Annual Report

The Head of Corporate Affairs and HR presented the Protected Disclosure Annual Report which was **approved having been proposed by Niall Duddy and seconded by Seán Ó Dubhlaing.**

9.3. Procurement Plan

Shane Gorey, HEO of Corporate Affairs and HR presented the Procurement Plan which was **approved having been proposed by Seán Ó Dubhlaing and seconded by Jean Beswick Duignan.**

9.4. Audit & Risk Annual Report

The Audit & Risk Annual report was noted.

10. Item for Decision

10.1. Decision whether to publish website notice pursuant to section 46B of the Teaching Council Acts – registered teacher [REDACTED]

The Following members of the Disciplinary Committee exited the meeting for this item: Tracie Tobin, Seán O'Neill, Anne Howard, Paul Moroney, Mary Magner, Áine Lynch and Declan Fahie. The following members were also not present for Council's consideration of this matter: Ciarán O'Donnell, Liam O'Neill, Anne Loughnane and Seán O'Dubhlaing.

The Head of Disciplinary Unit, Mr. Declan O'Leary presented this item outlining the outcome of the inquiry in this matter and providing a synopsis of the submissions from both the teacher and the Director's team with regard to the issue of publication of finding and sanction. The recommendation of the Disciplinary Committee was outlined to Council and the options available to Council under section 46B of the Act in terms of publication.

A decision was made to publish the finding and sanction on the Teaching Council website as per the draft website notice before Council which was recommended by the Disciplinary Committee, (without any information which would lead to the identification of the teacher), pursuant to section 46B(b) of the Teaching Council Act, having been proposed by Noel Cronin and seconded by David O'Sullivan

11. Item for Discussion

11.1. Council Calendar

The Head of Corporate Affairs and HR presented the Council calendar. The following points were noted in the ensuing discussion:

- Members raised the number of Tuesday meetings scheduled and the calendar being presented without consultation from newly elected members.
- The Council calendar is a function of the Executive staff of the TC.
- The Chair noted her concern regarding the gap in time between the dissolution of the current Council and the establishment of the new Council.

12. Item for Noting

12.1 Executive Committee

The Update from the Chair was noted.

12.2 Education Committee

The Education Committee Chair's report was noted.

12.3 Finance Committee

The Finance Committee Chair's report was noted.

12.4 Registration Committee

The Registration Committee Chair's report was noted.

12.5 Investigating Committee

The Investigating Committee Chair's report was noted.

12.6 Disciplinary Committee

The Disciplinary Committee Chair's report was noted.

12.7 Audit & Risk Committee

The Audit & Risk Committee Chair's report was noted.

13. Item for Noting

13.1 Teacher Release Update

The Director confirmed that the issue was raised as part of the Periodic Critical Review and that along with the Deputy Director and Chair she would be visiting the schools of outgoing Council Members to stress the importance of teacher release.

A Council Member outlined their continuing difficulties related to teacher release and thanked the TC staff and Council Members for their continued support.

A.O.B.

- o The Head of Corporate Affairs and HR advised members whose term was ending in April about the automatic deletion and wiping of iPads. Laptops will need to be wiped manually. All swipe access cards should be returned on the date of the final meeting on 25 March.
- o A Council Member raised the limitations of the T&S circular with regards to overnight stays following long meetings for certain members and the availability of food.

Meeting Ended 15:55

Signed:  Date: 27/5/2024
Council Chair

Signed:  Date: 27 May 2024
Secretary to Council

APPENDIX 1

Actions Arising from Council Meeting 04 March 2024

Action	Owner	Timeframe
Findings of the Board Effectiveness Review to be presented to Council.	Tom Ward/Head of Corporate Affairs & HR	Next Meeting
List of abbreviations/acronyms to be made available on future documentation.	All TC Executive Staff	ASAP
Laptops should be brought to the next meeting to be manually All swipe cards should be returned.	Outgoing Council Members	Next Meeting