

NCSE Council Meeting 30th January, 2018
103rd Meeting of the Council
(Single item agenda)

DES Offices, Dublin

Attendance: Council Members
Eamon Stack (Chairperson)
Sheelagh Drudy (Deputy Chairperson)
Eithne Fitzgerald
Helen Guinan
Joe Hayes
Don Mahon
Marion Meany
Johnny Murphy
Antoinette Nic Gearailt
Tom O'Sullivan
Finian O'Shea
Anne Tansey

Apologies: Áine Lynch

Also in Attendance: Teresa Griffin, Chief Executive
Mary Byrne, PO, Head of Special Education
Jennifer Doran, PO, Board Secretary
Sé Goulding, PO
Liam Coen, AP Research and Communications (present items 4 and 5)
Jim Mulkerrins, PO, DES (present item 3)

1. Reminder – Declaration of interests (standing governance item)

The Chairperson reminded members about declaring interests, as per the Code of Conduct for Council members. There were no items to declare.

2. Report on the NCSE Working Group on Additional Care Needs.

The purpose of the meeting was outlined. It is a meeting organised specifically to discuss the draft reports relating to the NCSE Comprehensive Review of the SNA Scheme.

The draft report from the Working Group on Additional Care Needs was circulated to members in advance and a presentation was provided to summarise the findings.

A number of examples were provided of how the proposed recommendations would impact on students with a wide variety of needs. The different supports that may be required and provided at different times to respond to the variety of needs of students were also outlined.

Council congratulated the work of the group and commended the breadth of elements addressed within it. Members considered it comprehensive covering many of the issues and

concerns raised in the past. The framework, vision and principles outlined were considered very good and positive for the system.

Some comments were raised as set out below.

- It was suggested to add more examples of how the model will work with students with particular needs.
- It was noted that there may be potential vulnerabilities regarding the therapy work and staff in the implementation of the model.
- With regard to the training elements required for the model, the AIM model provides a good example to learn from and it will be important to consider both on-site and e-learning. It was suggested to link the training programme into the Teaching Council's CPD framework.
- Costings will need to be worked out and work on this is already underway. DPER were represented on the Working Group.
- It was suggested that the role of the class teacher and their duties of care be outlined further in the report, along with the roles and responsibilities at school/Principal/BoM level and the training required.
- A bibliography is required.
- It is expected that the Working Group report will be published as a separate standalone document.

3. Draft findings from Complex Medical Needs Working Group

A presentation on the report of the Group was provided by Jim Mulkerrins from the DES, Chair to the Working Group. This work is not yet signed off; therefore some of the recommendations are still under consideration and are subject to change.

The Working Group was established to address the concern raised by the NCSE regarding some SNAs administering medical interventions for students with complex needs without appropriate training.

When the report is finalised, it will be submitted to the NCSE to inform their work and it will be circulated to the Cross Sectoral Team.

4. Draft report on the Comprehensive Review of the SNA Scheme

A draft report was circulated in advance of the meeting. A presentation was provided outlining the work to date, the themes that emerged in the research undertaken and the draft recommendations. The report requires further work and will be presented again to Council for sign off at the next Council meeting.

A number of comments and points were made during the discussion.

- The NCSE has been asked to consider the implication of the draft Bill on ISL in the context of the report. The NCSE policy advice on deaf and hard of hearing published in 2011 will be factored into this consideration and the expertise available on Council will also be drawn on as part of the deliberations along with further consultation with the Deaf education partnership group. NEPS offered their expertise to support the work also.
- Members considered that the report was generally well written, with clear, appropriate language and considered carefully the recommendations from the Working Group.

- It was suggested that the lay out of the report may need further consideration with a greater balance of information regarding the rationale for change and placing some of the detailed information around the consultation sessions to the appendices. Where appropriate, it would be useful to indicate which countries/states are being referred to in the evidence base.
- The NCSE will need to consider the demand and capacity requirements of receiving annual reports from schools.
- It was noted that the needs of parents should be considered in the context of the training programme.
- Members considered how the two reports will be presented and/or published to ensure complementarity while not creating confusion regarding the status and purpose of each report. It was suggested that the two reports should be published separately with an overarching statement regarding how they relate to each other.
- There will be separate research reports published on the website which have informed the work but these will not be published in hard copy. The report from the Complex Needs Working Group will also be published.
- Council members were broadly satisfied with the proposed recommendations and were requested to submit any additional comments to the NCSE by Friday 2nd February.
- A communications strategy will be developed for the launch of the report and Council will be briefed further on this.

5. AOB

1. The Council meeting on 13th June will now be in Knightsbrook as Trim Castle Hotel is booked on that day.
2. The Research Conference has been booked for 20th November in Croke Park Conference Centre.

Eamon Stack
Chairperson
21 February , 2018

Teresa Griffin
Chief Executive
21 February , 2018