



House of Commons – House of Lords

Council for Education in the Commonwealth

(Founded in 1959)

Three Year Plan 2006-2009

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Patrons: Lord Judd of Portsea • Lord Thomson of Monifieth KT PC •
Baroness Chalker of Wallasey PC
Joint Parliamentary Chairpersons: Tim Boswell MP • Simon Hughes MP • Sally Keeble MP

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MEMBERS OF GOVERNING BOARD, 2006 – 2007

CEC Governing Board Members

.

Patrons

**Lord Judd of Portsea, Lord Thomson of Monifieth KT PC, Baroness
Chalker of Wallasey PC**

Joint Parliamentary Chairpersons

Tim Boswell MP, Simon Hughes MP, Sally Keeble MP

Executive Chairperson

Valerie Davey (to June 2010)

Deputy Executive Chairpersons

John Oxenham (to June 2008), Peter Williams (to June 2009)

Honorary Treasurer

Richard Mawditt OBE(to June 2008)

Honorary Secretary

Kees Maxey (to June 2008)

Secretaries

Dr Balasubramanyam Chandramohan, Projects Secretary (to June 2007)

Peter Jeffreys, Membership Secretary (to June 2007)

Parliamentary Liaison Officer

Martin Kenyon (to June 2007)

Governing Board Members

Trevor Bottomley (to June 2007), Dr. Jonathan Jenkins (to June 2009)

Thelma Henderson (to June 2008), Dr. Alba de Souza (to June 2007)

Geoffrey Hulme, CB (to June 2007), Deryn Holland (to June 2008)

Rosemary Preston (to June 2009), Maureen (Mo) Sibbons (to June 2009)

Felicity Binns (to June 2008)

Co-opted Member

Mark Robinson (to June 2007), Professor Lalage Bown (to June 2007)

In addition to the elected officers and members, 12 organisations have the right to send observers to the Board.

THREE YEAR PLAN, 2006 – 2009

INTRODUCTION

This plan is first and foremost for CEC members, but it should also give others a good idea of the Council's character and activities. The plan is a rolling one, up-dated year on year. A draft is first put forward to the Annual General Meeting and then has to be approved by the incoming Governing Board. The Board is responsible for carrying it out, mainly through its three Committees, with the voluntary help of members and in collaboration with other agencies.

- The reasons for the plan are to give purpose and direction to the Council's activities, within a manageable time-period, which chimes in with the practice of three-yearly meetings by Commonwealth Education Ministers. The CEC is a small organisation and it is essential that its resources are well-used and well-focused.
- A structured programme enables members to know what is happening, but this does not mean that the CEC is not able to be flexible and respond to new challenges as they appear.

PART ONE: WHERE WE ARE NOW

The CEC; What It Is and What It Does

The Council's aims are: to provide a forum for informed discussion of Commonwealth education matters, to mobilise opinion and resources on behalf of education in the Commonwealth and to promote educational cooperation among Commonwealth countries and peoples. Within its programmes, experience can be shared, issues for action can be explored and public opinion can be better informed and mobilised. The Council is interested in *education broadly defined*, including all levels of formal education up to higher education, vocational and skills education and training and non-formal out-of-school and adult learning.

It is a voluntary organisation, comprising individual and honorary members and some corporate members. It is a company limited by guarantee and has charitable status. It is very fortunate in its links with Parliament through its Patrons and Parliamentary Chairpersons. Its strength depends on maintaining these and other relationships and on the size and commitment of its membership. It constantly works to widen its membership and its resource base.

Status and Relationships

The CEC has *formal Commonwealth accreditation*, providing the possibility of representation at the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings

(CHOGMs) and triennial Conferences of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEMs) and their associated civil society events. Recently, CEC had a delegation at the CHOGM and the associated People's Forum in Malta in 2005 and is planning to be represented at the next CCEM in December 2006 in Cape Town. In the last few years, it has become the custom for the Commonwealth Secretary-General to brief CEC members on the main outcomes of the Heads of Government Meetings. *All Commonwealth High Commissioners accredited to London are honorary members of the CEC.*

Secondly, ever since its foundation the Council has had a *Westminster base*. It has always had Parliamentary chairpersons and some other members drawn from the main political parties and the Council has a Parliamentary Liaison Officer. This parliamentary connection gives CEC a unique role in education advocacy in the Commonwealth.

In addition, the Council acts from time to time in cooperation/partnership with a number of like-minded bodies:

- Commonwealth inter-governmental agencies. These are the Commonwealth Secretariat, with whose education team the CEC works very closely, the Commonwealth Foundation and the Commonwealth of Learning;
- Other Commonwealth-wide organisations, such as the Commonwealth Countries League, and particularly the Commonwealth Consortium for Education, of which it is a member and in the establishment of which CEC played a key part, and the Association of Commonwealth Universities, which sends an observer to the CEC Board;
- UK Government (Department for Education and Skills and cognate bodies in Scotland and Wales, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Department for International Development);
- Education ministries and authorities, schools and colleges in other Commonwealth countries;
- UK-based bodies with parallel aims, such as Universities UK and UKCO-SA (the Council for International Education);
- Academic organisations with related interests, such as the UK Forum for International Education and Training and The London Institute of Education, which offers CEC members free reference library reading rights;

Two bodies with which the CEC has a special relationship are the British Council and the Royal Commonwealth Society/Commonwealth Club. The British Council is a long-time collaborator and supporter, while the RCS offers privileged membership rates to CEC members.

How CEC Works

The Council's main resource is its *membership*. Two recent recruitment drives have increased numbers to 125 individual and 18 corporate members; membership records and subscription renewals are handled by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), under an arrangement negotiated in 2004. Its *finances* come from subscriptions (now enhanced by Gift Aid) and from occasional surpluses on events. Current systems of budgeting and financial control have enhanced the Council's financial position. Nevertheless, the Council can only work effectively if it can build up a reserve fund and attain a guaranteed annual income of between £10,000 and £12,000. Many activities and projects are self-financing or generate a small surplus, but the Council relies on officers' and members' generosity in devoting time and sometimes their personal funds to its work.

The CEC's only bought-in service is administrative help provided by the League for the Exchange of Commonwealth Teachers (LECT), and for this the CEC is grateful.

As a voluntary body, the Council is responsible to its membership through the Annual General Meeting and its day to day operation is through an elected Governing Board. Administration is in the hands of its officers, while work is done by three Committees: Finance and General Purposes; Policy, Strategy and Public Affairs; and Programmes, Projects and Communications Members who are not on the Board may be invited to serve on the latter two Committees. Members are kept in touch through the publication of a Newsletter; and they and a wider public can visit the Council's web-site: www.cecomm.org.uk.

PART TWO; THE PLAN

Broad Programme Directions

Within the Commonwealth, the CEC will focus on the three events within the triennium – the 16CCEM in Cape Town in 2006, the CHOGM in Uganda in 2007 and the 17 CCEM in 2009. Issues of continuing interest are:

- The world-wide commitment to Education For All by the year 2015;
- Networking and the digital divide; possibilities of extending the use of internet –assisted learning and mobile phone access by schools;
- The role of agencies outside the state in education provision;
- Student mobility within the Commonwealth and factors affecting it, such as fees and visa charges;
- GATS – the trade in education services;

- The Commonwealth protocol on teacher recruitment by richer countries and the consequent brain-drain from poorer countries;
- Youth policy and exchanges, including schools linking;
- The working of the Commonwealth Education Fund and civil society advocacy for education in Commonwealth countries;
- Scholarship support to Commonwealth students and future commitment to the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan.

Within the UK, the Council will:

- Support the work of the British Council and the BBC in education;
- Follow up the implementation by the British Government of commitments in the Commission for Africa Report;
- Follow up the implementation and evolution of the International Education Strategy of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES);
- Follow up the new developmental initiatives presaged by the latest consultation document of the Department for International Development (DFID);
- Support the new Centre for Commonwealth Education at the University of Cambridge;
- Promote education about the Commonwealth in schools in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

In CEC's internal workings, there will be an emphasis on:

- Preparing some special celebratory activity or event for its fiftieth anniversary in 2009;
- Continuing to expand its membership;
- Strengthening its parliamentary links;
- Finding new sources of funding;
- Promoting its web-site;
- Finding new partners.

Advocacy

Building on the CEC's advocacy role in Edinburgh, Abuja and Malta, there will be efforts to stir up interest in the issues likely to emerge at the CCEM and CHOGM by preparing briefing papers and memoranda and meeting with relevant ministers and organisations. CEC is seen as a civil-society partner and will continue to take part in consultations arranged by them, as well as in civil

society events organised in parallel with the CCEM and CHOGM. It will, whenever possible, work in collaboration with its partners in the Commonwealth Consortium for Education.

A current project with these partners is the writing and publication of a series of “briefing notes” on aspects of Commonwealth education cooperation, for use by parliamentarians, the media, the public and delegations to Commonwealth conferences; five have already been issued and CEC will help to write and publish more.

In order to be of further use to Parliament and make more use of Parliamentary connections CEC is mooted the idea of a Westminster Hall debate ahead of the CCEM in December 2006 and to hold at least one meeting annually specifically for parliamentarians.

Regular Events

These will continue to comprise:

- An annual conference, in tandem with the Council’s AGM, offering a chance to think seriously about a current topic of interest to CEC members;
- The annual Gladwyn Lecture, given by a distinguished Commonwealth speaker;
- Four to five meetings a year, one of which will be held outside London;
- At least one liaison/briefing meeting a year with Commonwealth High Commissioners;
- An occasional semi-social activity or visit to a place of interest, such as Marlborough House and the British Empire and Commonwealth Museum.

Special Programme Activities

1. A recent study visit to Malta was extremely successful and there will be at least one further study visit within the next three years.
2. There will be a special celebration in 2009 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Council.

Development Projects (including research):

1. The CEC is proud to continue to be the charitable sponsor of Knowledge Aid for Sierra Leone (KASL), which helps pilot group of colleges and secondary schools to obtain teaching resources through the Internet. Work has begun on building a library of useful downloaded material and editing and adapting it to national conditions. The day to day management of the project lies with a committee which includes representatives of the CEDC

Governing Board. The CEC would like to see this project evaluated, expanded and more funding mobilised for it.

2. A CEC working group is exploring the scope for a project in partnership with a Commonwealth country in Africa for the achievement of Education For All (EFA) in an identified community, to serve as an exemplar for others. The CEC plans to assist with mobilising finance and material resources, and professional backup, in support of local efforts. The country envisaged at present is The Gambia.
3. During 2006, the CEC will complete a research project it has undertaken on the sustainability of UPE, for the Commonwealth Secretariat. It is being carried out by a CEC steering group and the work is being undertaken by pairs of researchers each consisting of a volunteer from CEC and a paid consultant from Africa. The report will be delivered to The Commonwealth Secretariat for presentation to the Commonwealth Education Ministers in Cape Town.
4. The Council's honorary Projects Officer will continue to explore opportunities for appropriate project research and development.

Information and Communications for Members and Others

1. All members will receive three copies of *Commonwealth Education News* three times a year. This will contain news of the Council's activities and events and also of Commonwealth programmes and initiatives by partner organisations.
2. The redeveloped web-site will be kept up to date and expanded.
3. The Board will acquire some basic exhibition materials/stands, for the CEC to use at Commonwealth events.
4. This plan will be distributed to all members.

Strengthening the Council

1. There will be a rolling recruitment drive to increase membership to 220 individual members and 45 corporate members by the fiftieth anniversary.
2. There will continue to be a conscious effort to redress the gender and age imbalance in the Governing Board.
3. The Council is recruiting a part-time assistant to the Hon. Secretary, in order to reduce the burden on him.
4. Fund-raising advice is being sought and a volunteer fund-raiser will be appointed during the year 2006.
5. It is imperative that the financial stability of CEC is further strengthened. The Council aims at a recurrent annual income of at least £12,000 by the year 2009.
6. The Board will consult members on a small increase in the subscription by the year 2008.