



Meeting of the General Council Saturday January 18th 2014 Room C17 Institute of Education, University of Durham

Letter to Chair from AN

1. This opportunity to report back on the seeds sown by your administration, and so regularly 'manured' by your erstwhile hon. sec., is strongly appreciated.
2. What follows deals specifically with 5 central aspects of our current programme and they are dealt with in alphabetical order:
 - a. **Conference** – the timely end of the traditional format (of 3 days at some remote campus trying to make financial ends meet) coincided with the Association's 50th anniversary (and DSF's lament) and encouraged the team of organisers to be brave and boldly go where no conference-member had been before. These organisers have responded imaginatively and for three years now have successfully networked our ever-expanding membership both nationally and internationally. (pls. see item e below.)

The one day 'conference roadshow' continues to move across the length and breadth of the UK. Now no longer confined to England – members in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales have had opportunities to familiarise themselves with current issues in mathematics education. The additional ones in Paris and Bruxelles were a complete sell out! Using carefully chosen keynote speakers and dynamic seminar leaders, the 'conference roadshow', complete with its own workshop bus and games trailer, has this year alone visited 20 localities during the conference season. Each one has differed as local attitudes and interests are reflected – this is a constant feature that appears to attract new members.

It is the intention of the present organising team to extend the conference season accordingly to every half term as well as the more traditional Easter window as our 'courses' - not conferences (old notions die hard) - are credit bearing, ultimately leading to Master's degree programmes.

- b. **CPD** – this is without doubt our biggest success to date. Back in 2009 – 2010 there was a slow start to this initiative, but by Easter 2010 a 10 day course was not only designed but accredited by the University of Humberside(UH). The course closely mirrored the ambitions established by both the Rose and William's reports. Every primary school has been targeted and the intention to

have a mathematics consultant in every school is still being hotly pursued. By the end of the academic year 2011 our 8 regional course teams had worked in all the local authorities at least once. This meant 5% of all primary staff had been accredited, their course points likewise leading to Master's programmes. By the end of 2012 – 18% of eligible primary staff; by 2013 - 34%; by 2014 - 54% and hopefully if order book figures are to be believed, we should meet a target of 78%.

The perceived wisdom behind this success can be bullet pointed thus:

- ❖ Very early and reliable accreditation
- ❖ Melded into the wider Master's degree accreditation programme for teachers
- ❖ Utilising the wisdom and experience of older ATM members (ex advisers and inspectors) to design, organise and run the course.
- ❖ Heavy sponsorship from www. advertisers within MTi, employment agencies and local authorities
- ❖ Government's stamp of approval in recognising the integrity of our course aim *'to mathematically empower both staff and children'*.

The only regret is that this course does not have a younger sister working to accredit staff involved with lower secondary children. Though recruitment agencies have suggested a scholarship package for overseas teachers from darkest Peru and the recently 'opened' areas of the Sino – Soviet pact of satellite countries! Note communication with the recently formed state of PaliSreal is slow but sure and their teachers are actively engaged in every exchange.

- c. **Internationally** – following the economic downturn of 2009 – 2010 and the inevitable 33.3% cutback in education, JMC, working with our business partners YouTube_(TM), BeBo_(TM) and Skype_(TM), over which we permanently preside, had, by 2012-13, forged the following permanent VC links with:
- Scandinavia (working practically)
 - Poland (working geometrically)
 - Italy (working with dynamical geometry)
 - France (axiomatic approaches)
 - Spain and Portugal (working historically)

In 2013 – 14, links were forged with all major pan-African associations and within the Mediterranean countries.

This year, following on from strong links with Latin America, the USA will decide whether or not to join our Federation of international teachers of mathematics (FITm). Their usual late arrival is expected! n.b. There has been some reluctance on Germany's behalf to take part but perhaps after talks with the Czech and Slovenia who knows.

Work is updated on a pan-European portal on a weekly basis between contributing partnership schools – actively supported by local members of an association – be it here or in another country!

d. **Journals – please note the plural.**

Following the success of one **MTi** journal in 2009, this was followed by 2 in 2010 and all 6 which were published interactively in 2011. The European economic downturn helped to swing this change of emphasis, with print, distribution and storage costs rising. A handful of older members who wanted ‘hard copy’ were easily accommodated by docu-technology and digi-printing – a facility whose capital costs we share with other subject associations. Though economics originally ignited this paradigm shift, it was the daily newspapers that presaged our change. Like the Grauniad, Times and Independent, we had to go online or go under.

Now, in 2014, **MTi** is online for 24/7! We now bring you the latest news and views of most aspects of mathematical life as we now know it. With a constant stream of challenging ideas and provocative resource materials in a wide range of learning formats to suit the subscriber, **MTi** has gone from strength to strength. Finally across the web we are able support teachers as they strive independently to maximise enjoyment and enthusiasm for any mathematical endeavour across the entire age spectrum, be they a junior subscriber or graduate one.

Such progress is NOW recognised by a series of bursaries and scholarships from the Lacey foundation which guarantees access to that dwindling number of reputed institutes of learning who appear to be staving off closure.

MTR is the real success story. Following their example MT, the widely loved journal of the ATM, at long last returned to its natural position as a quality journal dedicated to work at the interface of teachers and researchers. It is now published three times a year and contains an ongoing dialogue between those trying to advance our curriculum thinking and extend the boundaries of what constitutes ‘the empowering of mathematicians’. It has brought the research community and classroom practitioners back together again without the interference by legislators and others.

e. **Membership** – following on from the award to all teachers of funding to enable them to join subject associations, membership has grown dramatically. The key issues that helped format this subsequent growth have been:

- Cheaper access to one or two of **our** local (credit awarding) courses per year

- 'on line' personal membership at a nominal fee with corresponding lower costs for pdfs of resources and allied video downloads and other images
- Access to **MTR** on an issue by issue basis with the same lower costs for pdfs etc.
- Full range of personal web devices for any teacher and their family – web portals, email addresses, conferencing facilities (very much like Skolekom_(TM) in Denmark).
- Choice of cheaper materials and publications from other sister associations
- Enhanced video conferencing capabilities across the globe at substantially reduced rates

n.b. The biggest surprise has been the sharp increase in membership coming from the primary sector in the UK, with access to ATM's 10 day courses carrying with it free individual membership for a semester.

3. Thank you again for this opportunity to report back and there is just time for a reminder that the UK have teams in the international Kappel – Abel_(TM) mathematics competition. Teams from Cleethorpes (with Grimsby) and Leicester are taking part alongside teams from Norway, Denmark and Sweden. Both teams having the advantage of two OFs who have been training them - hopefully we shall do better this year.