

JOINT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR TEACHING STAFF

Minute of virtual Annual General Meeting of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff (JNCT) held via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 14 June 2022 at 2.30pm.

- Present:**
- Representing Perth and Kinross Council**
Councillors J Rebbeck and C Shiers; S Devlin, S Johnston, M Donaghy, J Donnelly, G Doogan and D Macluskey (all Education and Children's Services); P Johnstone (Corporate and Democratic Services).
- Representing Teachers' Associations**
L Gibb, L.J. Grant, M Laurie and C Weston (all EIS); M Mackie (SSTA).
- In Attendance:** F Mackay and K Robertson (Education & Children's Services); A McAuley, Joint Secretary (Teachers' Side); L Brown for Joint Secretary (Management Side).
- Apologies:** S Dowling and S Topen-Cooper.

1. APPOINTMENT OF CONVENER

Nominations for Convener were invited from the Trade Union side. C Weston nominated M Laurie. There being no other nominations, M Laurie was duly appointed Convener of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff for a period of 2 years.

M LAURIE, CONVENER, TOOK THE CHAIR

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CONVENER

Nominations for Vice-Convener were invited from the Management side. Councillor C Shiers nominated Councillor J Rebbeck. There being no other nominations, Councillor Rebbeck was duly appointed Vice-Convener of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff for a period of 2 years.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted and noted as above.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (ELECTED MEMBERS ONLY)

There were no declarations of interest made in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

5. MINUTE

The minute of meeting of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff of 22 March 2022 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

6. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) Appeal Process Moderation (Item 7 refers)

D Macluskey advised that the PT Development Days held last session on 26, 27 and 28 May 2021 had focused entirely on moderation and support for SQA and Alternative Certification Model (ACM). Feedback received had been positive and these days, in addition to the previous Twilight and Subject Network day, had been seen as very beneficial in delivering, moderating and quality assuring the ACM process.

This session, during September 2021, at the Twilight Subject Network Session, Subject Networks again reviewed and looked at SQA changes, advice and necessary assessment and moderation processes that were required for the session ahead. The two hour session also included time for subjects to plan for their whole day Subject Network Day which took place on 11 November 2021. The day was divided into support for Broad General Education (BGE) tracking of progress and SQA preparedness – making assessment judgements, moderation and evidence gathering. Activities were made up of a mix of centre led recorded presentations and subject directed input. Feedback received had been positive with some further areas of support identified as being required for some subjects.

Through the Subject Network Teams further opportunities for SQA support was signposted via the TRIC networks. The final twilight session for Subject Networks took place on Tuesday 8 March and allowed subjects an additional two hours of time to discuss, plan, moderate and ensure necessary arrangements, assessment and evidence was in place for learners/schools.

D Macluskey advised that the most recent Subject Network days which took place on 17, 18 and 19 May 2022 were used to self-evaluate both QIs in terms of subject but also provided time for Subjects to focus on activities and areas which they as specialists felt was most needed. Some Subject Networks decided to use the entire afternoon for SQA moderating activity.

The Committee noted the position.

(ii) HMle Recovery Visits to Nurseries and Schools (Item 8 refers)

G Doogan provided a brief overview on the HMle focused recovery visits to nurseries and schools in Perth and Kinross. Two early learning and childcare (ELC) settings had already been visited with two further ELCs scheduled to be visited in the coming weeks. Staff had advised the visits had been well planned and that that process had been thorough and supportive with support being offered around further areas for development.

Within the school setting, three Perth and Kinross primary schools, Kinnoull, Auchtergaven and Longforgan, had completed the self-selection process. Part of the selection process had included consultation with staff and with the centre. Each of the visits focused around looking at how schools were addressing the impact of Covid-19 with a particular focus on continuity of learning, wellbeing of children, young people and staff and safeguarding approaches set within the current context. The three Quality Improvement Officers for the Primary Sector participated in the visits.

Visits to the schools had been of a hybrid nature and agreed with the school in advance. Although some of the scoping and discussion with the parents and staff took place virtually each of the visits had involved some in-person element within the school.

The inspection teams had recognised the work and effort of staff during the lock down periods and the return to in person learning periods. The positives around the support for children's health and wellbeing at that time and the work which continued on curriculum development and some of the work around the circle of approach had also been recognised. The teams had also recognised that ongoing staff professional learning had been very focused and bespoke around the particular circumstances of Covid-19.

High level themes emerging around particular individual school contexts related to where to go next with some of the areas of curriculum development, learning and teaching and use of assessments. Feedback from staff in schools and parents on the process has been positive and some useful individual feedback from schools.

Following the visit each school is provided with a note of recovery visit to share with staff. QIOs were currently working alongside the individual schools to ensure that some the feedback is incorporated into the schools quality improvement planning for next year.

S Johnston acknowledged the really high quality work which had continued over the course of the pandemic. She advised that HMIE and Education Scotland had written to all school to inform them that normal inspections will resume from 5 September 2022.

The Committee noted the position.

7. CHANGE TO MEMBERSHIP

The following change to the membership of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff was noted:

Teachers' side – Jen Leslie (EIS) replacing Teresa Summers (EIS)

8. ADDITIONAL STAFFING 2022/23 BRIEFING NOTE JUNE 2022

There was submitted a briefing note by S Johnston and G Doogan (G/22/78) providing an update on the additional staffing coming to Perth and Kinross Council as a result of the 100 days commitment to increasing the number of teachers and support staff within schools and providing background information in relation to the process of what was agreed as a collective on the posts to be made permanent.

S Johnston referred to the temporary funding which had been received from Scottish Government as part of schools Covid recovery plan in 2021 and the strategic staffing group which had been established to consider how the temporary funding would be used. This had resulted in some additional training and interventions and some new roles and posts to aid Covid recovery.

A total of 46 permanent teachers have been employed within the Primary and Secondary, Gaelic Medium Education and the Inclusion sectors across the service.

In response to a question on absence rates and cover provided by the Covid Recovery Teachers S Johnston advised over the course of the current term there has been more of an ability for the covid recovery teachers to undertake supply work as covid absences had reduced in comparison to the levels experienced between January and March 2022.

G Doogan added that through the course of this school session some of the covid recovery teachers employed on fixed term contracts had been successful throughout the year in gaining fixed term or permanent contracts. Eleven full time equivalent teachers had been recruited into the primary sector as permanent supply across localities. S Johnston added that the permanent supply teachers in the main would be working on supporting schools to release staff for training on the interventions that will make a difference. In addition to the monies received from Scottish Government the Council had also provided money for additional staff resulting in 11.5 teachers in secondary schools who were permanently appointed by the Council in addition to those detailed within the briefing note G/22/78.

The Committee:

- (i) Noted the efforts made by Education and Children's Services to develop a clear intervention plan for recovery during session 2021-22 which had provided good evidence of what is working to support schools and settings to meet the needs of all children and young people.
- (ii) Noted that new roles had been trialled and evaluated during the last academic year and that the impact of those on outcomes had been positive.
- (iii) Noted that data had shown that the need to strengthen the support for children and young people with additional needs is a priority for Education and Children's Services.

- (iv) Noted that the ability to recruit permanently to those roles will provide an increased capacity to support children, young people and families to improve outcomes.

9. STAFF REPORTED INCIDENTS OF DISTRESSED OR CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR/INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE OR AGGRESSION – QUARTERLY STATISTICAL REPORT – TERM 3 – 2021/22

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Education & Children's Services) (G/22/79) providing a summary of the information gathered in relation to incidents in schools and other educational settings which result in an emotional or physical impact on a member of staff for the period 6 January 2022 to 1 April 2022 (Term 3).

Concern was expressed by the Teachers side in relation to the number of recorded incidents, the possible culture of under reporting of incidents and a widespread increase in low level behaviour in schools which was becoming increasingly difficult to handle.

In response S Devlin gave an assurance that any number of incidents of violence or aggression was a cause for concern for the service. Although the vast majority of young people regulated their behaviour on a daily basis she acknowledged it would be upsetting and distressing for any young people or staff who witnessed or were on the receiving end of incidents of challenging or violent behaviour. Schools were experiencing a post-covid impact on the mental health of young people, their habits, and the way they come into school and this was manifesting itself in some challenging behaviours.

S Johnston added that several local authorities had looked at how Education and Children's Services is working and engaging with its staff in relation to the reporting of incidents as it is not normal practice in many other Councils. In relation to under reporting she advised that the report only provided information that teachers and support staff chose to report to the centre. Management at all levels encouraged anyone who wanted to report an incident to do so and have it dealt with. As a result of the post-Covid-19 impact there was a need to work together with teachers, practitioners and staff in schools to reconnect and reset the balance in standards of behaviour in schools.

The Committee noted the quarterly report for the period 6 January to 1 April 2022 (Term 3).

10. PROCESS OF APPOINTMENT OF TEACHERS TO POSTS IN DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) (G/22/80) recommending revisals to the process for the appointment of teachers to posts in denominational schools which supersedes the current Local Agreement and will be effective from 14 June 2022.

The Committee agreed:

- (i) The process for the Appointment of Teachers to Posts in Denominational Schools as a revised Local Agreement which replaces the existing agreement be approved with effect from 14 June 2022.

11. SCHOOL TERMS AND HOLIDAY DATES 2023/2024 and 2024/2025

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) (G/22/81) seeking members views on proposals for the school term and holiday dates for 2023/2024 and 2024/2025.

K Robertson advised that the proposed scheme of dates followed the approved pattern of dates within Perth and Kinross since 2010. The only changes being proposed related to the pattern of In-Service days.

Work had been undertaken with TRIC partners seeking to better align some of the In-Service days across the local authorities. In addition to that Head Teachers in Perth and Kinross had indicated that the current pattern of In-Service days created a significant gap as there is currently no In-Service day in Term 4. The length of time between the In-Service day in February and the next one in August had also been raised.

The Draft Scheme proposed reverting back to the pattern used previously with In-Service days in each of the Terms. In feedback received from Head Teachers they recognised the need for an In-Service day in Term 4, but asked what the that pattern of In-Service days might be in relation to retaining two In-Service days in August. The views of the JNCT were being sought on the proposal in and any comment received would be considered along with the views of Head Teachers prior to any sign off by Education and Children's Services Senior Management Team.

C Weston advised the proposals were welcomed in general terms. However, if it was proposed to have two In-Service days in August and move one from November she asked that consideration be given to how this will be incorporated elsewhere within the session as Secondary School colleagues dedicated one of those days to specific meetings and groups.

The Committee noted the position.

12. TEACHERS' AGREEMENT FOR THE 21st CENTURY

There was submitted a report on the Teachers' Agreement for the 21st Century for Session 2022-2023 (G/22/82).

The Committee agreed:

The Teachers' Agreement for the 21st Century Guidance to Schools for Session 2022-2023.

13. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

(i) DIVERSITY SURVEY

P Johnstone advised of a Diversity Survey which had been undertaken over a period of 7 weeks. The survey had asked for information about equality and how people identified as disabled, or as an ethnic minority group and what they would be willing to share with the Council with a view to obtaining a clearer picture of diversity across the organisation. As only 11.7% of the Council population had completed the survey, and to encourage greater engagement, more work will require to be undertaken to identify why people may be reluctant to come forward and share their information.

P Johnstone advised the responses received will be analysed and reported back to the Joint Negotiating Committee at its next meeting on 20 September 2022 along with an update on activities or actions relating to the workforce plan which require to be refreshed beyond 2023 and the Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The Committee noted the position.

(ii) Venue for Future Meetings

S Johnston sought members views on a return to in-person meetings of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers' (JNCT).

The Committee unanimously agreed that future meetings of the JNCT be held in person at 2 High Street, Perth commencing with the meeting scheduled to be held on 20 September 2022.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would take place on Tuesday 20 September 2022 at 2.30pm.

VALEDICTORIES

- (i) Sharon Johnston advised that Margaret Donachy was attending her last meeting as a representative on the Committee. She expressed her thanks to Margaret for her support on the Committee which had been gratefully received on many occasions. Sheena Devlin also expressed her thanks to Margaret for her contribution to the Committee which had been greatly appreciated.
- (ii) Councillor Rebbeck advised that the Committee Clerk, Linda Brown, was attending her last meeting and thanked her for the help and support she had given him on this and other Committees over the years. Sharon Johnston, Sheena Devlin and Councillor Shiers also thanked Linda for her help and support over many years and wished her well in her retirement.

- (iii) Prior to the close of the meeting Sheena Devlin wished everyone a relaxing and restful holiday and expressed her thanks to everyone working in schools for the extraordinary work they had undertaken over the last two years.