

JOINT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR TEACHING STAFF

Minute of virtual meeting of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff (JNCT) held via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 26 May 2020 at 2.30pm.

Present: **Representing Perth and Kinross Council**
Councillors J Duff, J Rebbeck and C Shiers; S Devlin, M Donaghy, G Doogan, S Hagney, F Mackay (substituting for S Johnston) and D MacLeod (all Education and Children's Services) and P Johnstone (Corporate & Democratic Services).

Representing Teachers' Associations
L Gibb, L-J Grant, M Laurie, C Rose, T Summers and C Weston (all EIS); M Mackie (SSTA) and S Topen-Cooper (NASUWT).

In Attendance: A McAuley, Joint Secretary (Trade Unions); C Flynn, Joint Secretary (Management) and C Irons (Corporate and Democratic Services).

Also in Attendance: S Hope, Joint Secretary, Employees' Joint Consultative Committee

Apologies: S Johnston (Management side)
Councillor J Duff, Convener, Presiding.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted and noted as above.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (ELECTED MEMBERS ONLY)

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

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff of 3 December 2019 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Employee Consultation Events (Item 4(iv) refers)

In response to a question from S Topen-Cooper, S Devlin confirmed that staff surveys were on hold as there was a new approach to consultation linked to the Perth and Kinross Offer.

P Johnstone added that a Health and Wellbeing survey had recently been issued to all staff which would aid recovery and renewal within the Council. She added that use of PULSE surveys had been trialled but a decision was made not to proceed with them for now.

(ii) Counselling in Schools (Item 9 refers)

S Topen-Cooper asked for feedback on the introduction of counselling in schools and F Mackay advised that consideration was being given to all organisations who could provide the counselling for its introduction in August 2020.

5. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REVIEW

It was noted the Teachers' side would advise of replacement members for E Campbell and M Swan.

It was noted there were no changes to the Management side representation.

6. INSET DAY – 22 MAY 2020

There was submitted a briefing note to the Committee on an inset day previously agreed to focus on Additional Support Needs (ASN). Although normal working had been significantly impacted by COVID-19, it was considered the session planned for 22 May should still proceed. A virtual format was developed to support the delivery of key messages and activities and available to view over an extended period with resources available to be downloaded at any time in the future.

C Weston welcomed the flexible approach taken and advised there had been positive feedback and it was considered this should be the new way forward, but questioned a new policy being launched at this time, adding to workloads. Staff have an input in deciding and agreeing their own CLPL and it would need to be looked at how this sits within the policy.

S Devlin confirmed there would be further discussion prior to the introduction of the new ASN policy. F Mackay added that the focus on the inset day would tie in with the planned recovery and returning to classrooms.

C Weston acknowledged this would be taken forward in another platform.

S Topen-Cooper referred to the first of the two additional inset days when reducing workloads had been considered and feedback to proposals which had been requested by the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT).

S Devlin advised the SNCT had not yet asked for feedback but that schools would be expected to put actions in place as agreed.

C Weston advised that as EIS Local Secretary she had asked representatives in schools for comment and had raised with Management where action had not been taken to tackle workloads and this had been taken on board.

The Committee noted the position.

7. COVID 19 RECOVERY PLAN FOR RETURN TO SCHOOLS

There was submitted a briefing note for the Committee on planning for the phased return to school and nursery in Perth and Kinross, adhering to national guidance. It was noted that schools closed on 20 March and measures put in place for continuity of education. There were now seven Children's Activity Centres for children of key workers; vulnerable children and young people referred by Social Work colleagues.

The Scottish Government had issued guidance "Covid-19 A Framework for Decision Making" which outlined plans for recovery, including consideration of a phased return to schools.

S Devlin summarised the position in the Council with regard to dealing with the virus and actions that had been taken in terms of the command structure; governance; mitigating harms; communication with staff and public and thanked all staff for their involvement throughout the pandemic.

Specifically on the re-opening of schools, S Devlin added that it would be a complex process with many challenges but also with opportunities as things would not return to normal. In proceeding with a renewal and recovery plan the Council would look at what has not been missed, in considering what we need to do in the future. S Devlin advised that she had been attending national recovery meetings chaired by the Education Secretary; there had been eight meetings so far and various organisations were represented. In the national structure there were ten separate workstreams being considered.

For returning to school, a blended model of learning would be introduced and Head Teachers had been asked to plan for a blend of at school and at home learning taking account of capacity in each school and any transport issues. This planning was in the early stages and there would be consultation with unions; all staff; pupils and parents and proposals would be submitted to the Council meeting on 24 June.

S Devlin stated a lot had been learned from the operation of the Children's Activity Centres and staff involved had been reassured following induction and risk assessment. It is hoped there would be a consistent approach across the three local Councils with regard to provision of meals from Tayside Contracts and the most up-to-date advice would be followed for school meals.

M Mackie referred to the poll issued today to parents on the opening of schools on 11 August asking for views on whether they would prefer 2/3 days per week or alternate weeks and questioned how as a parent and a teacher he should respond. S Devlin advised half days had been considered but ruled

out due to cleaning and transport arrangements and added that Head Teachers would also be asking staff their preference but appreciated many teachers were also parents and it may be difficult for parents returning to work if their children were not in full-time education but the Council would work with employees to be as flexible as possible. The Scottish Government would be asked to clarify if teachers returning to work would be classed as key workers and would therefore be entitled to childcare. S Devlin also acknowledged that teachers returning to school could not also be home-learning with their children. She added that the intention was just to get a basic indication from parents of their preferences while making them aware of the blended learning approach.

C Weston welcomed the unions involvement as stakeholders and appreciated it was difficult to implement. A number of questions had been raised by Teachers' Panels for when the plans are progressed and S Devlin requested questions be submitted to her to gather the views of teachers and there would also be consultation with staff. C Weston referred to the First Minister's announcement that schools would now return on 11 August and S Devlin proposed a special meeting of the JNCT be held to discuss arrangements.

S Topen-Cooper suggested additional staff would be needed in schools to adhere to the risk assessments. S Devlin confirmed staffing would be reviewed as it was noted that some staff may be shielding and unable to return to work. P Johnstone added that workforce planning would be looked at corporately.

Councillor Rebbeck expressed gratitude to all teachers involved in home learning, the organising of materials had been very impressive. While he felt there was no substitute to teaching in school a collegiate approach had been taken to home schooling and he appreciated the challenges of that. C Weston confirmed she would feedback the thanks to members.

The Committee noted the position.

8. COVID 19 CRITICAL CHILDCARE AND CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY CENTRE UPDATE

There was submitted a report (G/20/50) providing an update on the Critical Childcare and Children's Activity Centres.

S Devlin advised that a survey was issued to key workers to plan where childcare was required and 5 centres were established and following the extension of key worker status there would be 6 from 4 May:

Newhill Campus; North Inch Community Campus; Community School of Auchterarder; Kinross Primary School; Invergowrie Primary School and Breadalbane Academy.

It was noted that Fairview Special School had also been operating on a very reduced basis for some children with very complex needs who required the stability of a learning and childcare setting.

Provision at the centres also included children identified by social work or school staff as vulnerable and who would benefit from a placement.

In addition to the activity centres there were 6 partner providers and 17 childminders working with the Council to deliver critical childcare.

The centres were open 7 days a week and throughout the holidays. The criteria for providing the service was reviewed and refreshed as the situation progressed.

The centres were staffed by support assistants, early years practitioners, teachers and inclusion staff. Educational psychologists had also been attached to each setting.

S Devlin advised approximately 415 children had been given a place in a critical childcare provision across Perth and Kinross and thanked all staff for enabling the provision to keep functioning across the area.

C Weston also thanked staff on behalf of the Teachers Panel for the setting up and running on the activity centres and asked if schools where these centres had been established would be deep cleaned prior to re-opening for the new school term. S Devlin advised the centres would be deep cleaned and were being routinely cleaned throughout their operation.

The Committee noted the position.

9. REVISED HEAD TEACHER JOB PROFILE

There was submitted a joint report by the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) and the Corporate Human Resources Manager (G/20/51) on a revised job profile for Head Teachers.

P Johnstone advised this was a generic job profile to be introduced from 1 August 2020. It was noted that the Head Teachers Education and Training (Scotland) Regulation 2019 required any teacher appointed to their first permanent post as a Head Teacher to have been awarded the Standard for Headship by the General Teaching Council for Scotland and it was necessary to update the existing profiles to reflect and comply with these regulations.

Two exemptions were noted: (1) Any person appointed as a permanent Head Teacher prior to 1 August 2020 was not required to hold the Standard for Headship; and (2) An individual who has not attained the Standard for Headship, may be appointed to a Head Teacher post on a temporary basis for a period not exceeding 30 months after 1 August 2020. P Johnstone added that any changes by the Scottish Government to the proposed implementation

date due to covid-19 would also be reflected in the implementation of this local agreement.

S Devlin advised the change would be shared with Teresa Moran the Roman Catholic Church representative on the Lifelong Learning Committee.

Resolved:

The revised job profile for head teachers, attached as appendix 1 to Report G/20/51, be approved as a local agreement from 1 August 2020 which would supersede any previous agreement.

**10. SNCT ADVICE ON WORKING TIME AGREEMENTS SESSION 2020-21
COVID 19**

There was submitted and noted SNCT advice on deferring negotiations on Working Time Agreements pending strategic advice from the Covid-19 Education Recovery Group and in light of the practical restrictions created by the current covid-19 crisis.

S Devlin advised this would be taken account of in the Recovery Plan and further discussion held at a future date.

11. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

- (i) In response to a question from S Topen-Cooper regarding enhanced provision to support children over the summer holidays, S Devlin advised there were no plans to, however, there would be a planned approach to teachers returning to school and latitude on transition activity in each school.
- (ii) C Weston referred to another JNCT meeting to be arranged to discuss annual leave arrangements for teachers due to schools returning on 11 August, a week earlier than planned.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted the next scheduled meeting was 22 September 2020, however, a special meeting would be arranged prior to 11 August 2020, the start of the new school session.