

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 16 March 2021 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 and D Macluskey (all
Education and Children's Services); P Johnstone (Corporate &
Democratic Services).

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

In Attendance: F Mackay, L Hamilton and B Martin-Scott (all Education &
Children's Services); A McAuley, Joint Secretary (Trade
Unions); C Flynn, Joint Secretary (Management Side) and
L Brown (Corporate and Democratic Services).

Apologies: S Johnston; L-J Grant and C Rose.

Councillor J Duff, Convener, Presiding.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies 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. MINUTES

The minute of meeting of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff of 8 December 2020 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Progress and Achievement (Item 8 refers)

D Macluskey reported that the roll out of progress and achievement in the secondary sector will be delayed to August 2022 due to the impact of the SQA alternative certification model. All Perth and Kinross Council secondary schools are using the SEEMIS module for S1 to S3.

The Committee noted the position.

(ii) Working Time Agreements (Item 9 refers)

C Weston welcomed the pragmatic approach taken by the Council which has allowed schools to be more flexible within the working time agreement. She acknowledged schools needed to recognise the importance of the pandemic on input planning but only with an allocation of hours that is realistic and achievable between now and the end of the school term.

S Hagney advised that Head Teachers had greatly appreciated that the Unions have been working very positively with management in schools throughout the last year in very challenging times. D Macluskey confirmed that a draft of the working time agreement had been circulated on the Head Teachers Bulletin with feedback requested by the end of next week.

The Committee noted the position.

5. VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION

F Mackay advised that the new reporting format was still not providing sufficient information and analysis to enable adequate scrutiny by JNCT members to take place.

To rectify the flaw in the initial set up of the system the reformed short life working group on Violence and Aggression has agreed that the Inclusion Team will work with colleagues in IT and Research, Analysis and Performance to improve the data gathering system for violence and aggression and distressed and/or challenging behaviour. This will allow staff members to specifically identify if the incidence they are reporting involves violence and aggression towards them. The introduction of this marker will make it much easier to extract the relevant data with this more accurate information being reported from Term 4 onwards.

In relation to Term 2 F Mackay advised there were 165 incidents reported some of which will relate to violence and aggression and some to distressed and challenging behaviour. The collective number of reported incidents in Term 2 compared to Term 2 of the previous year has reduced in both primary and secondary sectors.

By the next meeting of the violence and aggression working group the hand sifting of the 165 incidents reported for Term 2 will have been collated which will allow for better discussion on the data relating to violence and aggression. The working group will also receive a report on the trends that have emerged from the 3 weekly scrutiny sessions of the dash reports that come through the system.

P Johnstone added that the data reported to the JNCT relates to professional intervention and what can be done to support young people and children in relation to that whereas the Corporate Health Safety and Wellbeing

Committee (CHSWC) want to see the data relating to all staff including the school support staff. F Mackay confirmed that it will be possible to submit accurate and relevant data to both JNCT and CHSWC once the fine tuning of the system is complete.

The Committee noted the position.

IT WAS AGREED TO VARY THE ORDER OF BUSINESS TO HEAR THE SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY UPDATE (ITEM 8) NEXT

6. SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY (SQA) UPDATE

David Macluskey reported that the alternative certification model for National 5s announced by Scottish Government has now evolved from National 5s up to Advance Higher. This is a similar model but is broader in scope. A suite of guidance has been developed through a short life working group comprised of school staff; Head/Depute Head Teachers and some staff from the centre. The guidance is available on GLOW and SharePoint and will be shared with schools through Head Teachers. Liaison has also taken place with secondary Head Teachers.

As well as the Council's own authority wide moderation structure a further layer at TRIC level involving colleagues in Angus and Dundee will sit over and above the Council's moderation processes. This will assist in instances where there are points of difficulty with moderation judgements and discussions. The process is also designed to help with minority subjects. For example, where only 1 school in Perth and Kinross is offering an advanced higher subject it will allow teachers to have professional discussion with colleagues in other local authorities. Talks have also taken place with the SQA and D Macluskey confirmed the SQA is supportive of the process PKC have put in place and that the Authority is moving forward in step with colleagues in Dundee and Angus. A suite of guidance has also been produced for teachers and school leavers with examples of the type of conversation teachers might have with parents and young people.

The Scottish Government has allowed 2 days for assessment and moderation. Following consultation with Head Teachers it has been agreed to request 17 May and 1 June 2021. The 1 June date has also been selected by colleagues across TRIC. Subject network time has also been planned for Principal Teachers.

In response to concerns raised that the 17 May date will not provide teachers with sufficient time for moderation and to ensure that meaningful evidence is available for young people D Macluskey explained that there was no expectation that a full set of produced material would be ready from young people. He acknowledged there should be some flexibility to allow schools other moderation opportunities as and when required. The final uplift date will be 25 June.

In response to an enquiry on secure platforms and sharing papers, D Macluskey advised that existing subject network sites will be used as a meeting point for moderation. Scottish Government have also recommended the use of One Note with guidance currently being drawn up by Quality Information Officers in liaison with Education Scotland. In relation to security D Macluskey advised he will arrange for guidance to be issued to Subject Networks advising that material should not be shared from the SQA secure sites.

In response to general concerns raised at the administrative workload involved for teachers in scanning documents S Devlin suggested that in the first instances if what is being experienced in an individual school requires additional support there should be a discussion on this within the school concerned to ensure we were being proportionate in our response.

The Committee noted the position.

7. COUNCIL BUDGET UPDATE

S Devlin reported that she had met with C Weston and non-teaching union colleagues before the budget was set at the Special Council meeting on 10 March 2021. There were no new savings within the budget proposals which would have an impact on different staff groups across Education and Children's Services. She referred to a previously agreed saving relating to 11.5 FTE secondary teachers. This is the second part of previously agreed saving from a previous budget. It was agreed at this year's budget setting meeting that this will instead be accepted as a recurring pressure rather than a saving. However, there will be a different use made of that 11.5 FTE and discussions have just begun with senior managers in schools following on from the budget decision made at the Council meeting held on 10 March 2021 as to how this 11.5 FTE would be used across secondary schools in the future.

Through the budget motion on 10 March 2021 the following was agreed for ECS:

£136,000 of recurring funding support for the ongoing developments and the virtual campus.

Additional funding of £136,000 non-recurring to support the expansion of course choices.

£98,000 to support educational recovery through targeted use of community link workers.

£5,000 recurring to support transport and travel costs to the Highland Perthshire Learning Partnership.

Approximately £90,000 to support a new model of family support linked to securing the implementation of The Promise. Additional funding has also

been made available to support the mental health and wellbeing of children, young people and their families. The allocation of how that funding will be spent has still to be determined. Underspends in PEF and DSM can be used to target towards recovery.

In terms of COVID funding received from Scottish Government in Perth and Kinross over £800,000 has been received to support free school meals. Just over £1M in funding has been received to date for digital devices and approximately £3.1M has been received for additional teachers and support staff.

In relation to the environmental operation of schools the share of monies available to Perth and Kinross is around £2.6M. In terms of mental health and emotional wellbeing services £310,00 has been made available and in terms of the winter, for social protection, Perth and Kinross received £580,000.

The Committee noted the update.

8. EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COVID-19 UPDATE – MARCH 2021

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) (G/21/20) providing an update on Education and Children's Services Recovery Plan.

S Devlin expressed her thanks to everyone who had been involved in terms of the planning and preparation that goes into each phase of the return to school/nursery and for the effort of the Education Recovery Group in logistical planning and risk assessments for return to school.

C Weston advised that the level of communication which has taken place during the pandemic has been greatly appreciated by the trade unions.

The Committee noted report G/21/20 and the appendices to the report listing the guidance issued since September 2020 and providing a summary of Covid-19 cases within schools and nurseries.

9. STUDENTS/PROBATIONERS/GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL

B Martin Scott provided a brief update on students and probationer teachers. She reported that several Perth and Kinross schools have confirmed student placements which can be progress safely with appropriate risk assessments. Priority is being given to fourth years and PGDE students. Education Services will continue to work with the university and schools to address any issues related to student placements as they arise and will respond to any further changes in the current circumstances. From now until July 2021 there will be 98 teaching placements taking place in Perth and Kinross.

Universities had expressed their thanks to PKC schools and their staff for the support that has been given to students.

There are 26 primary and 17 secondary probationers in this year's cohort. The Education Service is working to the latest guidance which advises that probationers should be kept to 0.8 FTE time. In terms of probationers' final profiles she advised there should be 4 observations with 2 being face to face. Agreements are still being reached nationally for next year's probationer teachers.

B Martin Scott advised that work continues in relation to final staffing requirements for next year and the consideration of the placement of probationer teachers to ensure appropriate staff levels in Perth and Kinross schools. Work will also be undertaken to refresh and improve the probationary programme into next year. It was anticipated that an update on the Professional Review and Development Guidance will be submitted to the June meeting of JNCT with a view to it being implemented after August 2021.

The Committee noted the position.

10. STAFFING STANDARDS

G Doogan provided a verbal update on work which is ongoing on the review of staffing standards for the primary sector during the current academic session which relates to the leadership structure within a school and builds in the entitlement to a principal teacher in a primary school or a deputy head. She advised that a working group comprised of head teachers from schools of various sizes, officers from the central team and officers from HR and Finance have been reviewing the approaches to how that management is allocated.

Once the working group have an agreed model this will be brought back to JNCT with a view to full implementation from August 2022.

The Committee noted the position.

11. JOB SIZING PROCEDURAL REPORT

There was submitted a report by the Head of Human Resources (G/21/21) presenting a proposal for changes to the Local Agreement for Job Sizing Procedures.

P Johnstone advised the procedures give further clarification on roles and responsibilities of everyone within the job sizing process to ensure that they understand what is expected of them throughout each of the stages. It also provides clarification on timescales and how requests are progressed.

The Committee agreed the proposed changes to the Local Agreement for Job Sizing as detailed in Report G/21/21 and the appendix thereto be approved.

12. ANNUAL LEAVE DAYS AND IN-SERVICE DAYS FOR ACADEMIC SESSION 2020/2021

The Annual Leave Days and in-Services Days for Academic Session 2020/21 were noted.

13. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

There were no other items of business for discussion.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

15 June 2021.