

The Highland Council

Minutes of the **Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers** held in Committee Room 2, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday 21 June 2018 at 2.00 pm.

Present:

Representing the Management Side:

Mr A Baxter
Mr G MacKenzie
Mr R MacWilliam
Mr M Reiss

Representing the Teachers' Side

Ms A MacDonald (EIS)
Ms C McCombie (EIS)
Mr A Sutcliffe (SSTA)
Mr A Whiteford (EIS)

Also Present:

Mr B Alexander, Joint Secretary, Management Side
Mr A Bell, Joint Secretary, Teachers' Side

Officials in Attendance:

Ms A MacPherson, Workforce Planning and Staffing Manager, Care and Learning Service
Ms R Bell, Policy Officer, Care and Learning Service
Ms J Sikkema, HR Business Partner, Chief Executive's Office
Miss J MacLennan, Principal Administrator, Chief Executive's Office

Ms A MacDonald in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr J Finlayson, Mr A MacKinnon and Ms K Currie.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Meeting held on 9 November 2017

The Committee **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers held on 9 November 2017.

In relation to Item 5, Scottish Government Education Governance Review, an announcement was expected on 27 June 2018 in the Scottish Parliament on proposals for the Education (Scotland) Bill.

4. Work Plan Review 2017/18

There had been circulated Report No LNCT/01/18 dated 12 June 2018 by the Director of Care and Learning.

The Joint Secretary, Management Side referred to LNCT 6, Reduction of Class Contact Time for Primary Teachers, and to discussion which had taken place prior to the meeting. Para 2.7 referred to emergency circumstances and it was suggested that this be removed.

During discussion, the Joint Secretary, Teachers' Side, commented as follows:-

- in relation to the National Improvement Framework, concerns had previously been raised that pre-existing standardised assessments remained in use for certain year groups within the Primary sector. This was contrary to guidance on Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSAs) replacing all such other assessments and they were pleased that this was not going to be repeated in the coming school session;
- in response to a question regarding the discussions which had taken place between the Quality Insurance teams and schools regarding the usefulness of SNSAs, it was explained that the process was still in the early stages and time was required to assess progress, both at a national and local level;
- it was questioned what use schools and the Authority were making of the results. In response, it was explained that there was value in having a common approach for teacher judgement. Most Education Authorities applied the tests at the end of the school year but in Highland it was felt that this did not help teachers with the planning process. There were, however, issues which still had to be addressed with the P1 test and discussions were ongoing with the Scottish Government;
- the work done to date on Violence and Aggression was welcomed, as was the continued monitoring and implementation of strategies to upskill staff. Nevertheless significant work remained to reduce the number of incidents occurring; and
- although recognising the collaborative approach taken to the Review of LNCT Agreements, it was felt that it had proved difficult to facilitate useful negotiation. However, it was hoped relations could be developed in the coming year.

Thereafter, the Committee

i. **NOTED** the position in respect of:-

1. National Improvement Framework
2. Management of Schools (Sustainable Education in Highland Communities)
3. Whole School Job Sizing Reviews/Principal Teacher Entitlement Reviews
4. Violence and Aggression
5. Review of HR Policies; and

ii. **APPROVED:-**

- LNCT 2: Generic Principal Teacher Remit

- LNCT 6: Reduction of Class Contact Time for Primary Teachers, subject to the removal of Para 2.7
- LNCT 25: Family Leave – Keeping in Touch Days
- LNCT 26: English as an Additional Language Job Specification

5. Work Plan 2018/19

There had been circulated Report No LNCT/02/18 dated 12 June 2018 by the Director of Care and Learning.

The Joint Secretary, Management Side highlighted that the Work Plan would address some very important and strategic issues as well as Human Resources policies and LNCT Agreements. Discussions between the Management and Union Sides on LNCT Agreements had been good to date and it was hoped this would continue into the future.

During discussion, the Joint Secretary, Teachers' Side, commented as follows:-

- further discussion would be welcomed on the Sustainable Education in Highland Communities (SEiHC) Programme;
- whilst recognising that the saving achieved as a result of Whole School Job-Sizing/Principal Teacher Reviews, it was suggested that the resultant reduction in number of promoted posts was a significant element in the problems surrounding recruitment and retention of teachers. Furthermore, it was their view that there was an appreciable curricular benefit to subject specialist Principal Teachers being in charge of departments;
- in considering which LNCT Agreements needed to be reviewed in 2018/19, LNCT 8 (Exit Interviews), 9 (Secondment), 16 (School Improvement Through Self Evaluation), LNCT 21 (Collegiality) were suggested. In addition, LNCT 37 (Special Leave) would also need to be revisited once the High Council's Corporate policy had been revised, taking into consideration discussions over Bereavement and other personal/compassionate grounds; and
- in regard to possible new LNCT Agreements, it was suggested there was a need for one on Competence procedures as the policy currently in circulation related to a General Teaching Council Scotland document from 2002 which had been replaced in 2012.

At this juncture, Members expressed their appreciation of the staff's approach to the SEiHC Programme and their involvement with the Steering Group. This had helped with the reshaping of the Programme and, along with Parent Council representatives, had enabled a better understanding of all points of view, including what the Council was trying to achieve.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the position in respect of:-

1. National Improvement Framework
2. Sustainable Education in Highland Communities
3. Whole School Job Sizing Reviews/PT Entitlement Reviews
4. Review of HR Policies
5. Review of LNCT Agreements

The meeting concluded at 2.15 pm