

The Highland Council

Minutes of the Twentieth **Annual General Meeting** of the **Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers** (LNCT) held remotely on Tuesday 9 November 2021 at 3.25 pm.

Present:

Representing the Management Side:

Mr J Finlayson
Mr J Gray
Mr T Heggie
Ms E Knox

Representing the Teachers' Side:

Mr S Tillman (EIS)
Ms K Laird (AHDS)
Ms G Warburton (EIS)

In attendance:

Mr A Bell, Joint Secretary, Teachers' Side
Ms N Grant, Joint Secretary, Management Side/Executive Chief Officer Education and Learning
Ms F Grant, Head of Service Secondary Education
Ms A MacPherson, Workforce Planning and Staffing Manager
Ms R Bell, Policy Officer
Miss M Murray, Committee Administrator

Business

1. Appointment of Chair

The Committee Administrator explained that the Chair of the LNCT alternated annually between the Management Side and the Teachers' Side. For the coming year, assuming the Committee was content to continue the usual arrangement, it was the turn of the Teachers' Side.

The Committee **AGREED** that the Convenor of the Teachers' Side, Mr Lewis MacKenzie, be appointed Chair of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers for the coming year.

However, it having been explained that Mr MacKenzie was unable to attend the meeting on this occasion, Mr Steven Tillman, Vice Convenor of the Teachers' Side, took the Chair.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of, from the Management Side, Mrs M Cockburn, Mr G MacKenzie, Mr S Mackie, Mr M Reiss and Mr A Sinclair, and from the Teachers' Side, Mr Lewis MacKenzie.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of Meeting held on 9 December 2020

The Committee **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Nineteenth Annual General Meeting of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers held on 9 December 2020.

5. Approval of Membership

There had been circulated Report No LNCT(AGM)01/21 dated 28 October 2021 by the Committee Administrator setting out the membership of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers for the coming year.

It was explained that the Teachers' Panel Annual General Meeting had taken place earlier that day at which Lewis MacKenzie had been elected as Convenor and Steven Tillman had been elected as Vice Convenor. Otherwise, the Teachers' Side membership was as set out in the report.

The Committee **APPROVED** the membership of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers as follows:-

Representing the Management Side - four from the following:

Mr John Finlayson (Chair of the Education Committee)
Mr Tom Heggie (Vice Chair of the Education Committee)
Mr Jimmy Gray (Chair of the Corporate Resources Committee)
Mr Matthew Reiss (Vice Chair of the Corporate Resources Committee)
Mrs Muriel Cockburn
Mr Alex Graham*
Ms Emma Knox
Mr Graham MacKenzie
Mr Struan Mackie
Mr Andrew Sinclair

* to be formally agreed by the Education Committee on 17 November 2021.

Representing the Joint Union Side - four from the following:

Association of Headteachers and Deputies in Scotland

Mrs Kerrie Laird

Educational Institute of Scotland

Mr Lewis MacKenzie (Convenor)
Mr Steven Tillman (Vice Convenor)
Ms Caroline McCombie
Mr Neil Grant
Ms Jacqueline Hume
Mr Sandy Macfarlane
Ms Gabi Warburton
Mrs Clare Whiteford

Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association

Ms Sandra Mills
One other SSTA member to be confirmed

6. Dates of Future Meetings

The Committee **AGREED** that meetings of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers be held on the following dates in 2022:-

Tuesday 28 June at 3.00 pm

Tuesday 22 November at 3.00 pm

The meeting concluded at 3.30 pm.

The Highland Council

Minutes of the **Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers** held remotely on Tuesday 9 November 2021 at 3.30 pm.

Present:

Representing the Management Side:

Mr J Finlayson
Mr J Gray
Mr T Heggie
Ms E Knox

Representing the Teachers' Side

Mr S Tillman (EIS)
Ms K Laird (AHDS)
Ms G Warburton (EIS)

In attendance:

Mr A Bell, Joint Secretary, Teachers' Side
Ms N Grant, Joint Secretary, Management Side/Executive Chief Officer Education and Learning
Ms F Grant, Head of Service Secondary Education
Ms A MacPherson, Workforce Planning and Staffing Manager
Ms R Bell, Policy Officer
Miss M Murray, Committee Administrator

Mr S Tillman in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of, from the Management Side, Mrs M Cockburn, Mr G MacKenzie, Mr S Mackie, Mr M Reiss and Mr A Sinclair, and from the Teachers' Side, Mr Lewis MacKenzie.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Meeting held on 16 June 2021

The Committee **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers held on 16 June 2021.

4. Work Plan Review 2021-22

There had been circulated Report No LNCT/03/21 dated 25 October 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer Education and Learning.

During discussion, the Joint Secretary, Teachers' Side, made the following comments:-

- in relation to the Education and Learning Action Plan 2021/22, the augmented support team for schools was welcomed. However, given that seven of the eight appointments were from primary schools, concern was

expressed as to how support for secondary schools could be guaranteed, and the Teachers' Side looked forward to receiving information on remits and areas of responsibility;

- the Devolved School Management (DSM) Review had been well conducted with informed feedback at every stage from everyone involved. The Teachers' Side awaited further work on the areas identified and looked forward to full involvement of LNCT Teachers' Side members;
- in relation to Safeguarding in Education and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Improvement Plan, this appeared to be a highly involved piece of work given its complex nature. The Teachers' Side noted the proposed clear involvement of staff and it was hoped that this referred to staff at all levels given that the pastoral needs of primary and secondary schools varied widely. All teaching staff had some aspect of pastoral care embedded within their day to day lives and it was clear that everyone needed to know their role. Guidance and training therefore needed to be better than adequate;
- the postponement of whole school job-sizing reviews until next session was welcomed as it was something less for schools to worry about at a time of educational recovery. It was understood that there might be a small number of Primary Headteacher posts reviewed this session and it was accepted that this was perhaps overdue. However, this was not to be confused with the whole school reviews position;
- in relation to LNCT 4 Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures, any movement would be dictated by progress with the review of the Council's corporate policies, which remained ongoing;
- in relation to LNCT 5 Appointment Procedures – Principal Teacher and Depute Headteacher (Primary), the lack of an agreed process for the appointment of Principal Teachers could lead to inconsistency of approach. Given the reasoning behind the review of LNCT 23 Appointments Procedures – Headteachers and Depute Headteachers, the Teachers' Side wished to see a robust process in place for Principal Teacher appointments and it was hoped that any delays would be minimised;
- the Teachers' Side was content with the updates to LNCT 9 Secondment Policy;
- the Teachers' Side had raised the need to review LNCT 13 Generic Depute Headteacher Remit, and had provided some proposed wording, as it referred to out of date documentation. It had been hoped that the revised document would be ready for today's meeting but unforeseen circumstances had led to delays and it was likely a further meeting would be required to reach informal agreement prior to ratification by the LNCT in June 2022;
- in relation to LNCT 16 Self-evaluation for Self-improvement, schools restarting classroom observations had triggered concerns but it was accepted they were part of quality assurance processes within schools. It was important that schools were reminded there were current documents regarding the conduct of such proceedings and that adequate time needed to be made for both preparation and giving out of feedback, such time to be within the Working Time Agreement. The Teachers' Side looked forward to engaging with the Council officers assigned to this piece of work; and
- in relation to LNCT 23 Appointments Procedures – Headteachers and Depute Headteachers, having had further discussion the Teachers' Side remained concerned that, whilst education professionals were involved in an advisory capacity, the decision as to who was appointed lay wholly with parents and Elected Members.

The Management Side responded as follows:-

- the positive feedback was welcomed, and it was hoped that both sides could continue to work collaboratively going forward;
- in relation to the Education and Learning Action Plan 2021/22, the remits of the collaborative leads were currently being mapped out. First and foremost, their role would be to support schools, but they would also link into the strategic plan which had been agreed at the Education Committee in May 2021. Whilst it was disappointing that there was only one secondary collaborative lead, both the Strategic Lead (Secondary) and the Executive Chief Officer Education and Learning had a secondary school background. It was emphasised that wellbeing would be at the forefront;
- in relation to the DSM Review, reference was made to a meeting with Headteacher representatives earlier that day at which the joint work and connections that had been made had been celebrated. It was hoped to take a paper to Committee or full Council in December/early in the new year so that decisions on DSM could be made, with wellbeing again being at the forefront;
- it was emphasised that job-sizing was an auditory requirement;
- in relation to LNCT 13 Generic Depute Headteacher Remit, more Headteacher input might be needed before taking it forward;
- in relation to LNCT 16 Self-evaluation for Self-improvement, the need to be mindful of stress was recognised. However, the process of HM Inspectors returning to schools had been very positive so far, a number of revisits having gone particularly well and the impact of Covid on schools having been taken into account. The Joint Secretary, Teachers' Side, added that if inspections were handled sympathetically and with the wellbeing of staff and pupils at heart then that was a positive going forward; and
- in relation to LNCT 23 Appointments Procedures – Headteachers and Depute Headteachers, the Chair of the Management Side and the Education Committee concurred regarding the need for greater education professional involvement in appointment decisions and was supportive of taking the matter forward. Officers suggested that the Agreement be approved in the interim as important changes had been made which allowed for consistency in Headteacher and Depute Headteachers appointments. The Joint Secretary, Teachers' Side, confirmed that the Teachers' Side was happy to endorse the Agreement in the interim, subject to further review over the coming year. It had been revisited more than any other Agreement and it was hoped that the next iteration would be fit for purpose for many years to come.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the position in respect of:
 - a. Education and Learning Action Plan 2021/22;
 - b. Devolved School Management Review;
 - c. Improving Diversity in Education;
 - d. Safeguarding in Education and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Improvement Plan;
 - e. Whole School Job-Sizing Reviews/ Principal Teacher Entitlement Reviews;
 - f. Review of LNCT Agreements; and
- ii. **APPROVED:**

- a. LNCT 9 Secondment Policy (Appendix 1 of the report); and
- b. LNCT 23 Appointments Procedures – Headteachers and Depute Headteachers (Appendix 2 of the report) subject to further review over the coming year, particularly in terms of the role of education professionals in appointment decisions.

The meeting concluded at 3.45 pm.