

The Highland Council

Minutes of the **Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers** held remotely on Tuesday 13 June 2023 at 3.00 pm.

Present:

Representing the Management Side: Representing the Teachers' Side

Mrs M Cockburn
Mr J Finlayson
Mr P Logue
Mr D Millar

Mr T Coles (EIS)
Ms M Evans (EIS)
Ms S Mills (SSTA)
Ms G Warburton (EIS)

Also present as observers:

Mr J Grafton (Management Side)

In attendance:

Mr A Bell, Joint Secretary, Teachers' Side
Ms N Grant, Joint Secretary, Management Side/Executive Chief Officer, Education and Learning
Ms C Macklin, Head of Service, Early Years and Primary Education
Ms F Grant, Head of Service, Secondary Education
Ms A MacPherson, Interim Head of Resources
Ms R Bell, Policy Officer
Ms M Murray, Interim Principal Administrator

Mr J Finlayson in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of, from the Management Side, Ms S Atkin, Mr A Christie, Ms H Crawford and Mr C Munro, and from the Teachers' Side, Mr L Mackenzie.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Meeting held on 22 November 2022

The Minutes of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers held on 22 November 2022 were **APPROVED**.

4. Work Plan 2022-23 Update

There had been circulated Report No LNCT/1/23 dated 30 May 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer, Education and Learning.

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

- thanks were expressed in respect of recent Head Teacher events, particularly the Leadership Conference, the feedback on which had been very positive;
- whilst the importance of raising attainment was recognised, it was reaffirmed that the health and wellbeing of staff was key;
- in relation to the Devolved School Management Scheme Review, particularly the allocation of Principal Teacher management points in secondary schools and caseloads of pastoral principal teachers, management time also needed to be considered. It was added that, when reviewing LNCT 5 Appointments Procedures – Principal Teachers, the Teachers' Side had initially put in some points about stipulation of management time but having an agreed appointments procedure so there was consistency of approach across the authority had taken precedence. However, the Teachers' Side would be seeking to revisit the matter of protected management time for Principal Teachers in the future; and
- with regard to safeguarding, it was understood that all schools should have a policy or protocols in place and that all staff should have an opportunity to be involved in their creation. The Joint Secretary, Management Side, confirmed that all schools should have a safeguarding policy.

In relation to LNCT 23 Appointments Procedures – Head Teachers and Depute Teachers, the Chair highlighted that he had received positive feedback from Members and Parent Councils.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the position in respect of:
 - a. Education and Learning Service Plan 2022/23;
 - b. Devolved School Management (DSM) Review;
 - c. Improving Diversity in Education;
 - d. Safeguarding in Education and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Improvement Plan;
 - e. Whole School Job-sizing Reviews/ PT Entitlement Reviews; and
 - f. Review of LNCT Agreements;
- ii. and **APPROVED**:
 - a. LNCT 1 Local Recognition Procedure Agreement;
 - b. LNCT 5 Appointments Procedures – Principal Teachers;
 - c. LNCT 6 Class Contact Time for Primary Teachers;
 - d. LNCT 17 Agreement on the 35 Hour Week for Teachers; and
 - e. LNCT 23 Appendix 1 Code of Conduct for Headteacher and Depute Headteacher Interviews

5. Work Plan 2023-24

There had been circulated Report No LNCT/2/23 dated 30 May 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer, Education and Learning.

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

- the Collaborative Improvement Framework was a welcome addition and would provide greater levels of support and transparency. In relation to authority support visits, whilst there was no doubt these were required, particularly where concerns were raised, it was important they were conducted appropriately so as to be of greatest impact and avoid any unnecessary stress and anxiety;
- the Teachers' Side looked forward to appropriate involvement in the Integrated Children's Services Plan. There was still a belief, particularly amongst guidance and pastoral staff, that schools were seen as the default body to deal with things and, whilst it was recognised that it was necessary to identify the most appropriate lead professionals, it was emphasised that this should be based on the needs of the individual and not the lack of capacity in any particular service;
- in relation to the review of LNCT Agreements, LNCT 16 Self-Evaluation for Self-Improvement was currently 33 pages long and needed to be streamlined. It did not need to be lengthy but a framework covering school/classroom visits was required. Two additions were suggested, namely, LNCT 24 Temporary Contracts and LNCT 38 Flexible Working. LNCT 24 was outdated and did not reflect the current supply arrangements as set out by the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers. LNCT 38 needed to include the ability to request temporary variations, in accordance with legislation, and it was highlighted that the authority had a list of business reasons to refuse such a request. It was also necessary to include the ability for staff to seek voluntary transfer. However, it was recognised that this would not be straightforward and a carefully constructed and monitored agreement would be required. Such arrangements existed in other local authorities and others were looking at bringing them in, so it was only right that the Council did the same.

The Chair confirmed that the points raised had been noted and, in terms of the review of LNCT Agreements, he was sure the good working relationship that existed would continue and all aspects of the agreements would be reviewed taking account of due process.

The Committee **NOTED** the position in respect of:

- a. Embedding the Collaborative Improvement Framework;
- b. Improving Teaching and Learning across the Local Authority;
- c. Integrated Children's Service Plan; and
- d. Review of LNCT Agreements.

The meeting concluded at 3.15 pm.