

**WILTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
EDUCATION ADVISORY PANEL
JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE FOR TEACHERS**

HELD AT COUNTY HALL ON THURSDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2002

Present:	Mrs S Denovan	Assistant Director - Schools
	M Short	ATL
	J Hawkins	ATL
	Mrs J Breen	ATL
	I Phillips	NASUWT
	M Addleton	NASUWT
	J Hards	NASUWT
	T Sadler	NAHT
	D Morgan	NAHT
	M Harrison	NUT
	B Knock	NUT
In attendance:	Mrs J Tagg	Head of Personnel (CEL)
	R Wolfson	Director (CEL)
	R Woodroffe	County Personnel Officer
	Mrs J Bedford	Senior Admin Officer, Planning & Resources
	Mrs T Pike	Education Personnel Officer – Schools
	N Glass	General adviser for Secondary Schools
	Mrs J Tubbs	Manager School Support & Intervention

27/02 Apologies: M Trobe, A Batterham and Ms S Owen

R Wolfson, who was chairing the meeting for the first few items whilst S Denovan was attending to urgent business, welcomed D Morgan and J Hards to their first meeting.

M Short wished to state that he was no longer the chair of the Teachers Panel and that M Harrison would be taking over this function.

28/03 Minutes

J Hawkins said that p.5 20/2 Three Tier Review had an omission. He recalled that it was requested that a letter be sent out to all teaching staff before the end of term and this had not happened.

R Wolfson confirmed that an initial letter had been sent to all teaching staff in the Summer Term but no second letter had been sent.

It was recorded that this request had not been actioned.

The minutes were then approved as being a correct record of the meeting held on 11 July 2002.

29/02 Matters Arising

P4 performance management - M Harrison said that he was concerned about a letter issued to schools by J Hiscock, Education Personnel Officer, relating to guidance on progression on the Upper Pay Spine. He was aware that schools had been asking for guidance but his Association did not agree with all the points suggested, and that this could lead to conflict. He wished to know how this conflict could be resolved.

He stated that three items, including the Professional Development folder, were the problem, he asked if these were in the Pay and Conditions Document.

J Tagg said that one of these items had been covered at the last County Secretaries meeting but not the other two. She said that all guidance contained in the letter was drawn from advice from NEOST and that she understood that other LEAs were issuing similar guidance. WASSH had also developed its own guidance.

I Phillips said that schools need to be advised that criteria stated could lead to conflict. A joint letter from ATL, NUT and NASUWT would be sent to R Wolfson and J Hiscock with a request that the criteria should be withdrawn. If it cannot be withdrawn then the Associations would accept another letter to schools stating that Associations were not in agreement with the guidance given.

J Breen said that DfES Statement of "Substantial and sustained" is guidance enough.

J Tagg said this was not the case as many schools had sought advice.

R Wolfson said that the LEA had had to respond to the request from Heads and Governing Bodies for guidance on this issue. If it was possible to amend criteria then this should be done quickly. Perhaps the best option would be for Associations to write to schools making them aware of possible areas of conflict.

After further discussion it was agreed that this would be a useful way forward.

Action Point: *M Harrison would let J Tagg have a letter from Associations and it would then be issued to schools.*

30/02 Special Educational Needs Forum

R Wolfson confirmed that there had been three meetings over the summer period. The forum of 25 members had now formed four working groups. Each group would look at one of the four codes of practice with five topics to be looked at for each code.

The initial feedback was very positive with ways forward emerging. A report was to be written stating what had taken place so far. There would be a conference on 24 January with a large number of stakeholders invited, and the forum would meet again as a full body after this conference for feedback.

M Short requested that Associations be invited.

R Wolfson agreed to arrange this.

Action point: *R Wolfson to arrange Associations to be invited to conference on 24 January.*

31/02 Three Tier Review

R Wolfson said that he had just written to schools on ring fencing issues and that this letter would be sent to all County Secretaries as soon as possible.

J Tagg said that she was working on the Guaranteed Employment Scheme ready for the end of term. The aim was to have everything ready by January when decisions on The Three Tier System would be made.

M Short asked what progress was being made on skills audit.

R Wolfson said that middle schools were carrying this out and would meet mid December to discuss outcomes.

The Schools Organisation Committee would be reporting on Mere & Tisbury on 13 January and on 20 January for the other Salisbury schools.

The Guaranteed Employment Scheme meant that teachers at all levels could put themselves forward for consideration for posts. The process should be no more difficult than any other job interview. The aim was to seek to involve middle school headteachers for selection at other schools.

J Tagg said that it had been agreed at the last County Secretaries meeting that the next round of meetings would take the form of surgeries where staff could come and talk about specific problems.

J Hawkins asked if it was possible to have one named Personnel Officer as a contact for queries.

J Tagg explained that this would not be possible, but that herself and Zandra Letts would be the main contacts, and that depending on workload, other Personnel Officers may be involved.

M short wished to state that he felt that there would be a lot of work to be done and that he was concerned that the Personnel Officers would be put under excessive stress because of this exceptional workload and hoped that there were contingency plans in place for this.

R Wolfson acknowledged his views.

32/02 Six Term Year

R Wolfson welcomed J Bedford to the meeting for this item.

M Short said that the Associations had raised a number of concerns last year regarding the proposed new school year. He said none of these concerns had been taken into account, the proposed public holiday dates issue had not been addressed nor had that of exam timetables. The proposals were therefore unacceptable to the professional associations in a number of ways. For instance holidays at half term were taken from Christmas, when it had long been established that the Christmas Break should be “framed” by two weekends. To fit Christmas into a total of 13 days was unacceptable.

Easter is the traditional time for Union conferences, therefore if representatives were absent during school term time this would result in increased costs for cover.

Teacher Development Days were also fixed which was not popular with Heads who liked the flexibility of setting their own.

M Short continued that it was impossible to support the proposals. He also wished to add that he had spoken to colleagues in neighbouring authorities and each seems to have heard that plans have been adopted by neighbours when this is clearly not the case.

He concluded that it would not be possible to accept any changes until a national response had been made with all aspects of the change well consulted and thought through.

There was a discussion concerning TD days, Christmas holidays and the risk of pupils being taken out of school more often if changes were forced through without a national plan. The difficulties of Easter were also discussed, as this is not a fixed date and would always cause disruption under the new proposals.

R Wolfson agreed that nationally more was needed but if Wiltshire's neighbouring authorities did choose the new model then this could have consequences for Wiltshire parents/teachers who live on the borders.

R Wolfson said that Wiltshire had consulted in broad terms, Hampshire has consulted extensively and had found overwhelming support from Heads and parents. He agreed that if plans were adopted then interim years would be difficult whilst transition was taking place.

M Short said that he was not disagreeing with the principal, just the ill thought out aspects such as public holidays and the effect on exam timetables.

I Phillips said that he was concerned over the whispering campaign that was causing rumours of adoption when this was not the case.

R Wolfson said that all he wanted was for Wiltshire to be in the best position possible and he could not allow border areas to be disrupted. He confirmed that he had talked in broad terms with his opposite numbers but no discussions had yet taken place over contractual issues.

J Tagg confirmed that she had raised the issue of contracts several times but had not had a response.

A short discussion followed concerning the effects of changes on resignation dates and Terms and Conditions of Employment.

It was agreed that R Wolfson would do what he could to raise at a national level and J Tagg would pursue Terms and Conditions changes with NEOST.

Wiltshire would need to have a plan to follow if neighbours did adopt changes.

M Short suggested adopting our own Standard proposals but being prepared to change.

S Denovan returned to continue to chair the rest of the meeting and thanked R Wolfson for standing in.

33/02 School email

J Bedford remained for this item to respond to any queries.

M Harrison said that he had two requests for consideration.

County Secretaries wanted quick efficient communications with schools and asked if it would be possible to have an electronic address book of schools to be made available to them.

J Bedford said that she would look into this to see what could be done. However, she pointed out that the schools email project was still in its pilot phase. There had been lots of problems, for example where schools were not emptying their “mail boxes” resulting in message bounce back.

M Harrison also asked if it was possible to have NUT and NASUWT addresses at each school so that Associations’ communications to members could be sent direct.

J Bedford said that in time it may be possible to achieve this but at present no additional addresses were being set up for individual schools. It was not a good idea to clutter up the system at this early stage of development.

There was some discussion concerning increased use of email and Intranet access for schools.

Action point: *It was requested that schools links to the Intranet system be clarified.*

J Hawkins wished to add in defence of schools that full email boxes were the result of bad advice from LEA experts on which system to use and that he was very grateful for continued use of hard copies of documents.

B Knock said this was partly due to technology changes.

M Harrison asked if it would be possible in the next general newsletter to ask if schools would be happy to pass on certain items for the attention of their Association Representatives.

J Bedford thought this would not be a problem.

M Short said that he had realised that there was a small matter arising from the minutes of the last meeting: P9 – Establishment Directory – it had been requested that there was a HQ Staff section.

J Bedford said that it was intended to add this in the next issue but only when the reorganisation of branches had taken place.

34/02 Consultation

S Denovan said that L Cox had been unable to attend the meeting but she had given an update to be passed on. There was not a great deal to report, the Audit Commission Annual Survey had only had a 21% response rate from schools. Such a low rate invalidated the response. She had asked if there was any way to get schools to respond.

M Short said that schools were suffering from survey overload, and that there was no easy way to resolve this problem. However, he felt that if all surveys were consolidated into one then this may help the response.

B Knock suggested that an on-line version may have better success as it was easier to complete.

S Denovan said that she would pass this on.

M Short said that progress on consultation issues was slow. Concern had been expressed some time ago over representation selection and this had not moved on. The only progress had been on the ICT group where the principal had been recognised that Association representatives should be on various groups.

S Denovan agreed that she would pass these comments on.

35/02 Race Equality in Schools

S Denovan welcomed R Woodroffe to the meeting for this item.

R Woodroffe said that the background to this was that the Government had brought out a significant piece of legislation in the amended Race Relations Act. All Local Authorities have general duties to promote equality of opportunity. This legislation is pro-active and race equality is now a central part of how public services work.

The general duties are amplified by specific duties. For schools, a Race Equality statement had to be prepared. There was also a focus on pupil attainment. Schools had no specific duties on employment but LEAs did have other specific duties in this area. LEAs have a statutory requirement to monitor staff and applicants for appointment, promotion, training and appraisal. These requirements apply to schools too.

It is now necessary to monitor what happens after appointment, and a statement has to set out the actions that would need to happen over a three year period and would need to state how these are to be delivered.

Wiltshire County Council has to meet employment targets, ie the proportion of employees in the labour force and the various differences in the labour markets ie local and national. Wiltshire would also need to develop mutual support groups for ethnic minority workers.

All these developments would affect schools, as the duties apply to all County Council employees. It was recognised however, that some schools were their own employers and would have to take their own measures to comply with the legislation.

Actions would have to be taken to avoid being in breach of contract and there were serious implications.

R Woodroffe suggested that the way forward would be to set up a working party consisting of LEA officers, Association representatives, Headteachers and Governors initially to understand the requirements and then to sort out the arrangements for implementing the requirements and how these specifically apply to schools.

There was a short discussion concerning the general requirements and the training needs. It was agreed that R Woodroffe would produce a briefing letter to go to schools to inform them of the issues before the working party was set up so that everyone would know what the basic facts were.

36/02 Independent Review Group

M Short said that there was nothing to discuss on this item at this time.

37/02 Well Being Policy

S Denovan welcomed T Pike to the meeting for this item.

T Pike reported that the amendments requested had been made and that the policy had been issued to schools. In fact feedback had already been received from schools who had read the policy.

M Short felt that the aggressive behaviour of pupils and parents was a particular cause of stress and that although the guide started life as a corporate document he thought that this should be reflected in the school version.

T Pike confirmed that she had included this on P4 of the employee's guide, bullet points refer to difficult relationships with Managers/ parents and pupils.

S Denovan said that she had received a document from A Batterham that related to Heads and Deputies which would fit in with the Well Being Policy. It was agreed that this would be put on agenda for the next JCC.

J Hawkins thanked T Pike and S Denovan for this information and that it was always useful to have the facts.

38/02 ASTs/Dissemination of Good Practice

S Denovan welcomed N Glass to the meeting for this item. She said that a paper had been circulated at the last meeting had been taken away for reflection, she asked if there were any issues.

M Short said that there were no real issues and that he would await an update.

N Glass explained that it was part of his role to develop the role of Advanced Skills Teachers within the LEA and he circulated a paper to the meeting. He explained that he had talked to Primary and Secondary Heads and reactions differed. Primary Heads do not like the use of ASTs but Secondary Heads were moving away from this view.

Secondary Heads could see that there was an opportunity to enhance training and teaching within the schools to develop an area eg assessment or science. They could be used as a teaching post with some time for in-reach work within the school. The school would have to pay the extra cost of the AST to draw down funding.

Groups of schools could club together to get an AST who would work in the cluster. The AST could do outreach work for 20% of their time – like the old advisory teachers – and do some work for the school and for the LEA.

N Glass said that some of the thoughts expressed so far were that this may be a way of keeping some of the best teachers. That ASTs may be seen as a career route for those who wish to remain in teaching but not move to management.

M Short said that he thought the various models of AST use were interesting, especially the in-reach and out-reach elements.

There was a discussion over the length of contracts as 100% funding was only available for a year, perhaps this short period was not long enough to encourage the right teachers to become ASTs. The issues of one year contracts would be discussed with J Tagg as well as secondment possibilities.

N Glass said that Beacon Schools were being phased out and Specialist Schools were being introduced and this may have impact on use of ASTs.

S Denovan thanked N Glass for attending.

J Hawkins thanked N Glass for the paper presented at the last meeting on Good Practice Dissemination, he asked if it would be possible for J Croft to be invited to the next JCC to update on developments.

S Denovan agreed that she would ask J Croft to attend to update on the data side of development and also leadership/achievement issues.

NB. Since this meeting the DfES have announced that AST will be the responsibility of individual schools (budget withdrawn from S Fund) and Beacon Schools in Primary will disappear, they will remain in Secondary but be known as Advanced or Leading Edge Schools.

39/02 Intervention Strategy

S Denovan welcomed J Tubbs to the meeting for this item.

J Tubbs circulated a paper which showed numbers of schools in Special Measures, and which category of Special Measures each school was in. She explained the progression process and how long schools were taking to move from one category to another. The national average was eighteen months to move to 'good progress', however, some Wiltshire schools were taking twenty-four months and were not moving fast enough.

She said that it was important to get together with schools on the aspects that need attention, to invite schools to join in the discussion on additional support strategy. It was often difficult for Heads to acknowledge that they are in difficulties and confidentiality is crucial to avoid these feelings. It was useful to intervene at prevention stage level one, to try and pick up on issues before they escalated to a worse stage. Self-evaluation of schools had a long way to go but headteachers are becoming more aware of problems and triggering support

The recently produced Independent Review Group report recognised the strong partnership evaluation work that the LEA does. It also recognised that as an LEA we are becoming more and more efficient in supporting schools.

M Harrison said that it was essential to remember that teachers did not see intervention as successful, they were under intolerable pressure and the LEA advisers needed to be aware of this.

J Tubbs replied that she was very aware of the feedback from schools on this aspect and the need to help staff move on in areas of the action plans. There were different levels of support for the different stages of Special Measures and it was necessary to observe staff and to track their progress. It was important to remember that HM Inspectors would come back to schools if the correct intervention procedures were not carried out.

S Denovan agreed that teachers are under a lot of pressure and that their perception of the intervention process was different from that of the LEA advisers, who were also under pressure of a different sort to achieve results.

J Tubbs said that nationally Headteachers seldom remained in schools that were put into Special Measures and it was necessary to work with the Leadership teams. This in itself could cause stress to staff if the leadership style was part of the problem.

S Denovan said that this was an enormous issue and one that was not going to go away, it was agreed that it would be brought back to JCC at a later meeting. She thanked J Tubbs for taking time to explain the process to this meeting and for her work for the LEA in helping schools.

40/02 Capability Statistics

J Tagg said that the figures were discussed at the last County Secretaries meeting and that it had been requested to bring this item to the JCC for further discussion.

M Short said that it was difficult to interpret trends and that the greatest cause for disquiet was the 'improved and resigned' category. These figures had increased and everyone should be asking how they could be improved.

S Denovan said that it was difficult to hold exit interviews to find out how we could make a difference.

M Short agreed but it was essential to find out why these teachers had resigned and what could have been done to help.

I Phillips said that more reasons were needed on the figures as they did not give enough information, until this was resolved it would not be able to target what the problems were.

J Tagg said that GWIST were doing an exit survey for leavers as at 31 August 2002 and some data may be picked up from this.

J Breen asked if the 25 who resigned had all been teaching staff.

J Tagg said that this figure related to all types of staff.

M Short felt that a quantitative analysis was needed, there was a difference between the 50+ age group who may be willing to leave at the end of their career and those under 40 who were reluctant to do so.

T Sadler asked if association members had help in these cases.

J Tagg said that staff are always encouraged to seek advice from their professional association if they have any problems, and that teachers would normally do this.

Action point: *J Tagg to analyse the 25 resigned category staff.*

41/02 Redundancy Criteria

J Tagg said that this had been discussed at the last County Secretaries meeting. At that time she had understood that the whole procedure had been agreed and would only need

amendment for the recent legislation on use of fixed term contracts, however, the professional associations had then raised queries on other aspects of the selection criteria.

J Tagg said that she had looked at the archives of past meetings and could confirm that the procedure had been agreed in 1997 but that the NASUWT had objected in principle as they would only promote 'LIFO' (Last In First Out). However, the NASUWT had agreed the document as long as separate wording was sent out with it which stated their objection in principle to the criteria but would support having some form of agreed criteria rather than nothing.

J Tagg issued a revised draft document which had had the reference to fixed term contracts removed. She said that she could write to schools to tell them of the need to remove this paragraph whilst agreement was being sought on the whole document. She also suggested removing the exemption for NQTs, as the skills, qualifications and experience of staff should be looked at which could on occasion mean that NQTs would meet the skills and LIFO criteria. Para 2 could also have 'or cost prohibitive' added if this was thought desirable.

M Harrison said that he would stand by the County Secretaries discussion and did not want the statement that Professional Associations had agreed this procedure to be at the top.

I Phillips said that his response was still the same, he could not agree to anything other than LIFO.

M Short said that this was a big problem, he was prepared to look at rewording as it was desirable to have an agreed procedure to avoid schools creating their own.

There was a short discussion on the issues of agreeing criteria and redeployment.

It was agreed that this procedure would be looked at more closely at the special County Secretaries meeting to be held on 5 December. In the meantime J Tagg would continue to issue the existing document and would write to schools concerning the need to remove the fixed term contract paragraph.

I Phillips gave notice that the NASUWT would withdraw from this agreement.

42/02 Recruitment Situation

J Tagg said that this issue was always under review and that there was nothing specific to report. She asked if the Associations would like to invite J McDonald from GWIST to the next meeting to give an update on progress.

M Short thought that this would be a good idea, especially if she could give further information on the exit survey.

It was agreed that J McDonald would be invited to the next meeting.

43/02 Remodelling/Teaching Assistants

J Tagg said that two meetings ago she had been asked to provide draft guidance notes on the use of Teaching Assistants. However, because this issue is changing so rapidly nationally she had not yet produced any notes.

It was agreed that this issue would be brought back to JCC whenever the national picture was made clearer. It was also suggested that someone could be invited to talk about the Pathfinder Project if this would be appropriate.

44/02 Peri-Music Teachers

T Sadler had asked for this item to be placed on the agenda because he was concerned that although pupils were paying the same fees certain teachers were being paid different rates.

He understood that peri-music teachers were treated differently from other staff and were not union members or contributing to the teachers pension scheme and were not on proper contracts.

J Tagg said that there were various rates being paid for music teachers and that a review was currently under way. She said that she was not aware that anyone was being excluded from joining a pension scheme and that if T Sadler could provide her with specific examples of individuals who had been informed that this was the case she would of course look into the background.

S Denovan said that she would invite V Hayward the Head of the Music Service to the next meeting for this item, when more information could be brought concerning the items raised.

Action point: *Invite V Hayward to the next JCC for this item*

45/02 Any other urgent business

M Short said that he was asked to nominate a representative from TAC to the Schools Forum and he was concerned about the way forward for this forum which only had one primary headteacher from the Primary Heads Forum. He had a general point concerning the legal constraints, that observer status was needed with one member from TAC voting and the others as observers.

B Knock said that the timescales were very tight and that the PHF nominate 4 representatives this term and a different 4 next term.

S Denovan said that the working group had met the previous night and had started to look at the way forward. The schools forum would not meet until this had been clarified.

It was agreed that this would be a separate item at the next JCC.

Dates of the meetings for 2003:

JCC meetings will be held on:

Thursday 20 March 2003

Thursday 3 July 2003

Thursday 20 November 2003

County Secretaries meetings will be held on:

Thursday 20 February 2003

Thursday 5 June 2003

Thursday 23 October 2003

S Denovan thanked representatives for their help in getting through so much in this long session. As there were no further items to discuss the meeting then closed.