

## **Branch Report – 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019 – Deborah Turner**

The first Branch Meeting will be held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2019 –  
Committee Room 2, County Hall, Matlock.

Starting time 5.00p.m.

Tea/Coffee/Biscuits provided.

Branch membership - consists of all standard members and salaried work-based student members.

### **Negotiating mechanisms within the Derbyshire Branch : -**

#### **SJCC**

The SJCC (Schools Joint Consultative Committee) is the forum for the LA to consult with Trade Unions on school policies/procedures and other issues impacting on schools and members. Currently the NEU is represented by myself and Monica White as joint Branch Secretaries.

The SJCC meets termly. Trade Unions have a pre-meeting a week prior to the full SJCC meeting to discuss agenda items.

The SJCC also has working parties to discuss/update/amend policies in accordance with statutory frameworks (e.g. the Pay Policy needs updating annually following publication of STPCD document); changes to legislation; and priority - determined annually by the LA but with TU agreement. Working parties are a relatively new introduction to the consultation process but have had an extremely positive impact.

It is incumbent on employers to consult on matters relating to pay and conditions of service. The SJCC gives the LA the mechanism to consult meaningfully with Trade Unions on behalf of their employees and for Academies that 'buy back' their HR package.

It perhaps should be noted that although there is a requirement to 'consult' this does not equate to 'agree'. The policies implemented in LA schools are generally agreed but there are/have been a few exceptions. For instance the 'Authorised Leave of Absence Policy' introduced in November 2018 was felt by the NEU to be 'of detriment' (even following substantial redrafting and change). This document has been sent into schools with the caveat that it wasn't agreed by all Trade Unions.

As a Branch Secretary one of my major concerns is that some academy chains do not have a 'Joint Union Recognition Agreement' which provides them with a similar negotiation/consultation mechanism. I am working with Regional Office to identify these employers in order to encourage adoption of the ACAS agreement/similar.

The SJCC is expected to sign off the following policies/guidance/ other matters at its next meeting: -

- Administration of Medicines (Agreed)
- Managing Allegations (Agreed)
- Single Central Record (Agreed)
- Term dates 2020 – 2024 (Agreed)

School Policy Reviews for next SJCC working parties: -

- Disciplinary Procedure (update)
- Employee Well- Being (new)

### **SCHOOLS FORUM**

Representatives: -

- Each school sector e.g. primary, secondary, special, nurseries, academies;
- Governors;
- Councillors;
- Trade Unions (no voting rights on financial matters)

Focus for discussions are wide ranging but include school funding, budget formulae, educational provision e.g. new builds, and the strategic reviews of school services. It receives reports from a wide range of LA personnel and its decisions impact on schools/academies across Derbyshire.

The NEU currently has 2 representatives attending – myself and Monica White.

### **Local Authority Health & Safety Committee**

This is similar to a working party as updates/policy changes are referred to SJCC for approval. Meetings are again organised on a termly basis.

## **SACRE**

Representatives include: -

- LA (Committee D);
- Trade Unions (Committee C);
- Church Of England Representatives (Committee B);
- Other Christian & Non-Christian denominations (Committee A);
- Co-Opted members.

This Body is responsible for the production and implementation of the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus.

It also develops and organises relevant CPD for teachers in RE.

Currently the NEU has 2 representatives attending the meetings – myself and Alexis Watkins.

## **Improvement & Scrutiny Committee**

A forum for elected councillors to scrutinise all areas of service provision. Trade Unions have one representative on this body. Currently I fulfil this role.

The forum can/does look at issues impacting on schools and has focused on some educational matters (as well as health, social services etc) -

For instance the 'Derbyshire County Council School Permanent Exclusions Review' was produced in February 2018.

The introduction to this reads: -

*Councillor Judith Twigg, Chairman of the Improvement and Scrutiny – People Committee and Chair of the Working Group, introduces this report;*

*“This review came from a desire to understand better the issues surrounding school permanent exclusions. Members of the working group wanted to meet with officers from the authority and partner organisations as well as teachers and school support staff to gain their perspectives.*

*There has been a worrying rise in the number and rate of school permanent exclusions both nationally and in Derbyshire in recent years. The review was designed to understand why this is happening and what could be done in response.*

*This report presents our findings of how the authority, schools and partners are working together in the area of permanent exclusions. Members of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee have worked with Cabinet Members, officers, partners and*

*teachers and support staff to bring this report to a conclusion and I would like to thank all those involved for their assistance and contributions.”*

I hope the above is helpful in outlining the negotiating processes within the LA which I feel are robust and wide-ranging.

If you have any comments/questions/queries in respect of this report please email [deborah.turner@neu.org.uk](mailto:deborah.turner@neu.org.uk)