# Education HR Network

**Confidential Minutes**

**14 November 2013**

## IN ATTENDANCE

Alison Bell London Borough of Brent

Wendy Croft London Borough of Bromley

Cathy Brearley London Borough of Croydon

Mark Langston London Borough of Croydon

Mark Nelson (Chair) London Borough of Ealing

Jackie Bourchier (Minutes) London Borough of Ealing

Andy Merryweather London Borough of Ealing

Bev Banks London Borough of Enfield

Teresa Hennessy London Borough of Harrow

Louise Howard London Borough of Havering

Peter Furness Schools HR Co-operative (Hillingdon)

Alan Grant London Borough of Islington

Susan Flatts London Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

Rosa Vaz London Borough of Lambeth

Karen White London Borough of Lewisham

Val Butler London Borough of Merton

Chris French London Borough of Newham

Vivienne Peters London Borough of Redbridge

Joan Forrest London Borough of Southwark

Margaret Zietz London Borough of Sutton

Dawn Reilly London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Sharon Kerr London Borough of Waltham Forest

Val Brown London Borough of Westminster

Maria Stock London Borough of Westminster

Anita Jermyn Local Government Association

Brendan Ryan DfE

Keith Andrews DfE

Nola Godbert DfE

Hazel Briant DfE

Helen Kemplay DfE

### APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Angela Huggett (Bromely), Jackie Sorrell (Hounslow), Kim Chudley (Redbridge), Julie Chow (Wandsworth), Serena Lansley (London Councils).

**1. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2013 were agreed and noted.

**2. MATTERS ARISING**

Item 4 – DBS – Wendy Croft from Bromley asked the network what they were doing about the cost of the on-line update service and who would pay for it. A number of Local Authorities (LAs) explained what they were doing.

1. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION UPDATE (Anita Jermyn)

Anita Jermyn (AJ) reported that NEOST had submitted evidence for the next STRB report. Recommendations would be published around February 2014 and this would be followed by a consultation on the recommendations, to which NEOST would respond.

AJ reminded authorities that she was seeking views to feed in to the NEOST evidence to the STRB on the 2014/15 teacher pay award. The STRB’s recommendations on this were due to be submitted to the Secretary of State in May 2014.

Then followed lengthy discussions regarding headteacher pay and the difficulties that have arisen following the changes to the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document (STP&CD) in 2011.

Mark Nelson (MN) highlighted to AJ some other areas that needed to be addressed in the STPCD. These included:-

* Safeguarding/pay protection
* Allowances
* Administrative/clerical tasks
* Rarely cover
* Advice & guidance for Governors

Anita said that these issues had been covered in the NEOST evidence to the STRB, to inform its 24th Report to be published early in 2014.

The use of probationary periods was discussed. The DfE view was that there was nothing to prevent schools including probationary periods in teachers contracts if they wished, although it might meet with resistance at school level as it has not been usual practice.

1. **FEEDBACK ON ANY ISSUES ARISING FROM SCHOOLS IMPLEMENTING NEW PAY POLICIES**

* **What model policies are being used**
* **Trade Union responses**
* **Support staff inclusion**

Brendan Ryan started by thanking the network for allowing he and his colleagues from the DfE to attend this meeting.

Hazel Briant (DfE) said it was very interesting and useful to hear from the network about the issues/concerns about this year’s changes to the STP&CD. Hazel went onto say that it is very hard to anticipate what we’re going to get next year. It is a huge remit with lots of significant recommendations. The time frame will be difficult, probably worse than last year. Hazel explained that they want to give as much notice as possible and asked the network what they thought of the draft document that they produced last year? Members of the network agreed that the draft document was a good idea. Any changes need to be known as soon as possible, so as processes/systems can be changed, e.g. payroll systems being able to handle changes to pay. A longer lead-in time to the changes would be good. There was discussion about the possibility of the STRB remit being brought forward in order to allow the publication of the STP&CD at Easter. It was acknowledged that this would not be achievable in 2014, but LA’s welcomed the suggestion for future years.

Then followed lengthy discussions on the different pay policies that were being used by different boroughs and how the unions were responding to these. Reference was made to a strike at a Berkshire school where the 2011 ballot had been used. Lewisham had received legal advice which suggested that the national ballot was not sufficient for local strike action. Lewisham agreed to release this advice. The DfE legal advice line for schools is no longer active.

One question arising from the discussions on pay policy was from Bev Banks (Enfield) and one other, about pay progression on the main pay range and what would be the situation if someone had been on maternity leave for the whole of the year leading up to the consideration for a performance related increase. The DfE said that they would take it back and see if they could provide further advice and clarification on the point. Another LA said they had written into their pay policy that the previous 2 years would be looked at in these circumstances. Anita was not convinced that using evidence from another time period was within the law because of the wording of the STPC, which states that evidence must be used from a particular time period (during which the teacher has been absent). However, the DfE’s view was that it is not contrary to the provisions of the STPCD to use evidence from another time period.

Another point that was raised was that if the last 2 years are looked at because the teacher was absent for the whole of the last year, then she may well have already had an increase in respect of that period. Therefore, is it possible to award an increase twice for the same period? It would be helpful if we could have confirmation on the thinking one way or the other.

*Post meeting note:-*

*Anita has agreed to raise this issue with the DfE again at a meeting with them in late February and believes this will be the best time to raise issues of this nature because the most appropriate people are there and we may get support from other stakeholders.*

The issue of whether support staff were included in the pay policy or not, was also discussed.

AJ said it would be useful if members of the network would send her copies of their pay policies please.

1. **DfE CONSULTATION ON TRADE UNION FACILITIES IN SCHOOLS**

* **Feedback on any consultation responses**
* **Feedback on any issues arising in boroughs with TU facilities in schools**

The consultation has now closed. MN asked when would we get a response to the consultation. Guidance should come out by January and it will be non-statutory advice.

There was general discussion about TU Facilities and discussion about the conduct and behaviour of Union representatives.

MN raised the issue of collecting strike data to the DfE and explained how this was a lot of work and was very time consuming.

The DfE said the information on the strike action that is collected is really useful to them and it helps them look at trends. The network said it would be good if the DfE could feedback to LAs on the strike data.

1. **NEW LONDON REPRESENTATIVE NEEDED FOR TEACHERS PENSIONS ADVISORY GROUP**

MN explained that the representative for the Teachers Pensions Advisory Group now works for an Academy. MN has been asked if we could provide a representative for this group. If anyone is interested please speak to MN.

1. **REPRESENTATION OF ACADEMIES ON EDUCATION NETWORK GROUP**

This issue had been discussed before and again the network voted ‘No’ to the representation of Academies on the Education Network Group.

1. **PAY & CONDITIONS OF SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGERS –** (Havering)

Louise Howard (Havering) explained the issue of pay & conditions of School Business Managers (SBMs) and that it had been suggested that SBMs should be paid on the STP&CD and on leadership scales. There was general discussion on SBMs’ pay & conditions and Anita confirmed that SBMs should not be employed on STP&CD conditions as they are not teachers. It was proposed that evaluation of SBM posts using the Hay job evaluation scheme may provide better outcomes for senior staff.

1. **LONDON COUNCILS REGIONAL UPDATE**

Selena was not present at the network. An update was handed out at the meeting.

1. **OTHER BOROUGH ITEMS AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Question**

Teachers Pay Award 2014-15 **(Teresa Hennessy, Harrow)**

***Response***

*The general view was that the 1% should be applied across the board including allowances.*

A number of other queries were raised by colleagues.

1. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on 6 February 2014.

MN thanked the DfE for attending the network meeting and invited them to come along to our next meeting in February.