

## Schools' Workforce Joint Consultative Panel

A meeting of Local Joint Consultative Panel was held on Wednesday 28 September, 2010.

**Present:** Cllr Ann McCoy (Chairman), Cllr Andrew Sherris, Sue Foreman, Bob Lupton, David Campbell, Hans Ruysseenaars, Stephen Payne, Alan Christon and Alan Woodmass

**Officers:** Eric Jewitt, John Hegarty (CESC), Paul Hiser, Mark Wagstaff (R), Michael Henderson (LD)

**Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of** Cllr Mick Eddy, Cllr Ken Lupton, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Roy Rix, Elaine Kay and Patricia Gibb

**SWJC  
10/10**

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

It was noted that the issue described in the minutes relating to staff transfer of two members of staff to the North Shore Academy had been resolved.

Staff representatives indicated that during lobbying they had met with both of Stockton's MPs.

**SWJC  
11/10**

### **Staffing Issues**

Noted that: -

- The transfer of staff to the North Shore Academy and Thornaby Academy had generally went very well
- North Shore wanted to continue its relationship with Stockton's HR Service, however, Thornaby would be going with another provider.

Noted that cost associated with HR provision outside the Council was likely to be significantly more. It was suggested that arrangements at Thornaby would involve sharing a HR specialist with another Academy.

The Chairman indicated that she would attempt to establish what the position was regarding Thornaby Academy's HR support.

It was queried whether Academies could join the North East Regional Employers Organisation. It was agreed that officers would investigate and report back to the Chairman who would advise the Panel.

Noted that current rumours indicated that the School Support Staff negotiating body would cease in the near future. It had not held a national meeting for sometime. A staff representative explained that he was aware of plans to abolish the body.

**AGREED** that:-

1. discussion be noted.
2. the Chairman attempts to clarify the position relating to Thornaby Academy's HR

**SWJC  
12/10**

### **Schools' Capital Investment**

John Hegarty was present and provided an update on Council plans following the cancellation of Building Schools for the Future.

It was explained that things were still uncertain and this was likely to continue for several months. The Council did not know what funding might be available and what the criteria might be. It was noted that Cabinet would consider a report in October proposing the development of a borough wide strategy for capital investment in all primary and secondary school buildings.

The strategy would attempt to rank development needs in order of priority and thorough consultation would take place. The Council would need to continue to evaluate funding opportunities as they arose.

There was a need to consider what the needs of all the Borough's School buildings were. It was noted that primary school numbers were rising and would continue to do so for at least 5 years. Secondary school numbers were falling but the spike in primary numbers would feed through to Secondary Schools

The Council still had a commitment to Campus Stockton and resolving the issue of pupil places South of the Borough.

The Cabinet report would also refer to the applications for free schools that had been received. The Chairman explained that she had written to the Minister asking for him to provide more information about the free schools applications.

Discussion turned to the split site at Northfield School and the problems being experienced. It was noted that parents were confused about what the position was and rumours circulating Billingham did not help with stability. It was noted that new build may be possible for Northfield but much would depend on what came from government.

The Panel noted that the BSF Team was still essentially together and would be valuable in the months to come given its knowledge and expertise. In response to a query the Chairman indicated that she would find out how the Team would be funded.

**AGREED** that discussion be noted.

**SWJC  
13/10**

### **Government Policy**

The Chairman explained that she had asked officers to bring together all of the announcements government had made relating to education. The Panel agreed that there was currently a multitude of proposals out for consultation. These were often very large documents, with short timescales for responses. The Panel questioned whether any worthwhile response could be realistically given in some cases.

It was noted that a full list of current proposals was available on the Department of Education's web site.

David Campbell explained that he had a meeting with Nick Gibb, Minister for Schools, arranged and would e mail the Panel if anything interesting came from it.

**AGREED** that discussion be noted.

**SWJC  
14/10**

### **Health and Safety**

Mark Wagstaff was present from the Health and Safety Unit to provide an overview of the work the unit undertook within schools. Work included: -

- Provision of advice on all aspects of health and safety
- Provision of comprehensive training programme and bespoke training sessions
- Liaison with the Health and Safety Executive etc on behalf of schools
- Promotion of health and safety culture within schools
- Investigating work place accidents
- Reviewing accidents and assaults
- Provision of advice on risk control mechanisms
- Ensuring legislation was being adhered to.
- Provision of library of health and safety resources
- Undertaking Annual Audits of Schools leading to the provision of a report that identifies any legal requirements and recommendations for the areas covered by the inspection
- Scrutinise arrangements for school visits

The Panel noted that with regard to accident figures, some schools were under reporting incidents as it depended on how Head teachers viewed those incidents and the weight they

attached to them.

The Panel was aware that teachers suffered verbal and physical abuse from parents but the extent of the abuse was also difficult to quantify, as correct forms were not being submitted. It was explained that all authorised staff had access to the Employees Protection Register, which provides a comprehensive register of the risks of threatening, violent, abusive or other anti social behaviour directed towards employees or agents of the Council. Parents of children, at the Borough's Schools, who had displayed such behaviour, may be included in the Register, if reported.

The Chairman queried whether potential child protection issues could be flagged up using information on the Register and asked the Health and Safety officer to discuss and consider with appropriate officers from CESC.

Members discussed stress experienced by staff and noted that stress related absences were monitored within absence figures. The Panel asked that absence figures be routinely reported to its meetings. It was explained that the Council offered a confidential service enabling staff to contact an independent stress Counsellor.

It was suggested that management practices within schools could be a great source of stress and management training in this area would be beneficial to some managers. It was noted that people management training was available. It was agreed that this issue should be taken to School Governing Bodies.

**AGREED** that: -

1. Officers consider the issue raised relating to the Employee Protection Register and report back.
2. the Panel receive absence statistics at future meetings.
3. opportunities and benefits of people management training be raised at school governing body meetings.
4. the work of the Health and Safety Unit be noted and Health and Safety become a standing item on Panel agendas.

**SWJC  
15/10**

The Panel agreed a work programme for coming meetings and asked that an additional meeting be scheduled for November 2010.

November 2010	Schools' Capital Investment Staffing Issues (to include absenteeism figures) Government Policy Work Programme
22 March 2011	Schools' Capital Investment Staffing Issues (to include absenteeism figures) Government Policy Health and Safety Work Programme
12 July 2011	Schools' Capital Investment Staffing Issues (to include absenteeism figures) Government Policy Health and Safety Work Programme

