

Report for: Schools Forum

Report Title: Provision of TU Facilities Time for School Employees

Report from: Sue Blevins Senior HR Manager (Schools, ER and OD)

Date : 15th July 2015

1. Purpose

This report provides an update to the Schools Forum on the budget allocated to fund TU Facilities time for school employees.

2. Introduction

2.1 Trade Union facilities time is a legal requirement to undertake individual support for employee and collective consultation / negotiation on key issues affecting school staff.

2.2 Funding for these activities was prior to 2013-14 a decision for the Schools Forum / Cabinet to determine the resources that should be allocated.

2.3 Following changes in regulations the funding of Trade Union Facilities time is made in different ways:

- Academy schools have funding delegated to them to make school level decisions on how they wish to provide facilities time for trade unions
- Maintained Secondary and Primary schools also have this money delegated to them but may de-delegate this through a decision at schools forum
- Special Schools require a separate buyback decision.

3. Background

In March 2015 the decision of all maintained schools was to de-delegate the cost of Trade Union Facilities Time to the Local Authority to manage. In addition most academies agreed to contribute to the TU Facilities time. The total resources available are anticipated to be £132,000 a reduction of approximately £10,000 on the previous year.

Taking this change into account there has been a re-allocation of time for Professional Associations and UNISON, this also takes account of the latest membership numbers

4. National Advice on Trade Union Facilities time for School Employees

In January 2014, the Department for Education issued national advice on Trade Unions Facilities time for school employees, which highlighted that:

4.1 Union representatives in schools are entitled to reasonable **paid** time off during working hours to take part in trade union duties. Union representatives

and members are also entitled to reasonable **unpaid** time off for trade union activities

- 4.2 There is substantial flexibility for maintained schools and academies, to determine their own approaches to facility time to ensure positive workplace relations.
- 4.3 All union representatives who receive facility time to represent members employed in schools should spend the majority of their working hours carrying out their main duties as school employees.
- 4.4 Employers should ensure that spending on facility time is as efficient as possible.
- 4.5 There should be full accountability and transparency on facility time given to trade unions.

5. Local Application of National Advice on Trade Union Facilities time

- 5.1 The budget to support trade union facilities time is made up of funding from:
 - i) Schools Forum – based on agreement by Primary and Secondary representatives from maintained Schools
 - ii) Contribution to the cost of TU facilities from Academy and Special Schools
- 5.2 All recognised unions have a branch officer employed in a School/ or in the Council, and have been provided with paid time off to undertake Trade union duties on behalf of schools. There are some branch officers who are retired teachers.
- 5.3 In addition a number of schools will have local school TU representatives, who provide advice and guidance to employees in school.

6. Use of Facilities Time

- 6.1 TU facilities in Wirral is used for a number of reason including :
 - i) Representing individual member of staff on employee relations issues such as disciplinary, sickness absence, work performance, grievance
 - ii) Representing a groups of staff in a school on collective employee relations issues such as redundancy, TUPE
 - iii) Representing all TU members at Local (Wirral Wide) consultation meeting including health and safety and joint consultative meetings
 - iv) Representing al TU members in the development, negotiation an , where possible, collective agreement of HR policies and procedures for schools.

A breakdown on the allocation and use of trade union facilities time is shown below:-

7. TU Facilities time - 2015-16 (days allocated)

Trade Union	Casework/ Facilities Time	Union Learning	Health and Safety	Teacher Member Panel
NUT	155	10	10	
NASUWT	110	10	10	
ALT	70	10	10	
ASCL	28			
NAHT	28			
UNISON	164			
Total	555	30	30	45

8 TU Facilities Time – Activities

The activities over the past academic year are summarised as follows:

- Weekly meetings with Director of Children’s Services
- Meetings with Chester/Cheshire West over the new Traded Services Company – Edsential
- Monthly Professional Association meetings with LA
- Annual Policy review day
- JCC – preparing and attending
- Schools Forum – Attending and Preparing
- Redundancies/Restructuring – consultation with schools and members. 1:1 meetings and appeals.
- Conversion of Maintained Schools to Academies – TUPE consultation
- Casework with members, giving professional advice eg. restructures and redundancy
- Grievances
- Disciplinary Meetings
- Capability Meetings
- Return to work meetings

- Advice on Ill-Health
- Compromise Agreements
- Pay Appeal
- Visiting members at home in connection with any of the above
- Phone enquiries from members
- Responding to consultation from Schools over Policies
- Attending Union Training Days e.g Shared Parental Leave, Redundancy

Recommendation

That the Forum notes the report

Julia Hassall
Director of Children's Services