

**Select Committee on Lifelong Learning - 10 November 2005**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**Update on Remodelling the School Workforce**

**Purpose of Report**

1. This report provides an update to the Committee on progress of Remodelling the School Workforce.

**Background**

2. On 15 January 2003, the Government, employers and school workforce representatives signed a National Agreement for teachers that "*will raise standards in schools by tackling workload and freeing teachers to focus on teaching and learning*". The Agreement has a number of key features, which include contractual changes for teachers and a progressive reduction in teachers' overall workload; these were introduced in September 2005, and this has led to changes in support staff roles in school.
3. As a result of the National Agreement for teachers, support staff in schools will have the opportunity to undertake extended roles, to receive relevant training and to access a more coherent career structure. This initiative also gives employers the opportunity to review remuneration. The Agreement also aims to promote equality and consistency of terms and conditions of employment for support staff in schools.
4. A national agreement for support staff was not introduced; rather the DfES required each local authority to reach a local agreement based on the national recommendations.
5. In Dudley, by March 2004, job descriptions for five levels of staff had been produced and two rounds of consultations had taken place with staff and unions. Headteacher nominations were sought and a team of five representatives formed a negotiating team. Matrices were drawn up and five schools (a combination of primary, secondary and special)

agreed to pilot the scheme. Formal negotiations were held in October 2004; unfortunately full agreement could not be reached. With GMB supporting the proposals and UNISON not, a decision was taken locally to implement the proposals negotiated as a recommended Dudley Scheme in June 2005.

### **The Current Position – Phase One**

6. From June 2005 schools have been adopting and implementing the Dudley Scheme in their schools. A total of 103 schools out of 112 have adopted the scheme and implemented it as at 25 October 2005.
7. During this time, as no joint agreement was reached, UNISON and Council officers invited ACAS to broker a deal that could mean a joint agreement being reached on Remodelling the School Workforce.
8. Discussions with ACAS are still continuing. GMB have stated that they do not intend to amend any provision of the scheme, whilst UNISON continue to debate changed terms of assimilation for a group of minority staff, namely the nursery nurses. Both the Council and headteachers have indicated a willingness to move to a position where collective agreement could be reached.
9. A review of Phase One was agreed to be conducted in October 2005. This was deferred to December 2005, subject to further proposals from UNISON and ACAS involvement. The review will aim to bring unions, headteachers and practitioners together to discuss and review the whole process. It may be that further changes are proposed during the review.

### **Phase Two of Remodelling the School Workforce**

10. During the negotiation period of Phase One of Remodelling the School Workforce, it was agreed to defer planning and implementation of Phase Two. Phase Two aims to review all other roles in school such as administrative staff, other classroom-based support staff such as technical staff (Science, ICT) and staff in the behaviour strand such as learning mentors. The planning for Phase Two commenced in June 2005 when several template job descriptions were drawn up for consideration by union representative consultation groups and the wider school workforce.

11. Changes have been made following these consultations and headteacher consultations have already taken place during September 2005. Revised documentation is due to be forwarded to schools for a second consultation period following the half term break.
12. Following the second consultation period, and subject to the result of ACAS talks for Phase One, a provisional week of detailed negotiation is planned for January 2006. The same process will then be adopted for Phase Two as was followed in Phase One. There is some concern about the future of Phase Two in the event that no agreement is reached through ACAS conciliation.

### **Finance**

13. The introduction of the new framework has had financial implications for both schools and the Council, particularly in the short-term (as staff will have received immediate back pay to January 2005). In the longer term there will be incremental pay increases, but these will be offset against the number of qualified supply teachers in schools. It is estimated that Phase One will have cost in the region of £2.5 million. This is being funded through the Minimum Funding Guarantee for schools. Phase Two will need to be costed; however, at this stage we are not in a position as yet to offer any precise estimation of cost.

### **Law**

14. The Council may appoint staff for the discharge of its functions upon such terms and conditions as it thinks fit under Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972. Classroom-based support staff are engaged in discharging the Council's education function under the Education Acts.

### **Equality Impact**

15. The implementation of this scheme aims to broaden the career opportunities for this group of staff. The scheme applies fairly and equitably to all staff regardless of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief and disability.

### **Recommendation**

16. It is recommended that the Select Committee notes this report.



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### **List of Background Papers**

1. Remodelling the Workforce -  
Joint proposal on pay and conditions of service for classroom based support staff.
2. Implementation Guidance  
Headteacher updates – March 2004, May 2004, July 2004, October 2004