

**Minute of the National Joint Negotiating Committee (NJNC) – Side Table (Support) Meeting on Wednesday 5 June 2023 (1000-1200), via Video Conference**

<b>In Attendance</b>	
Collette Bradley	Staff Side
Martin Clark	“ “
Chris Greenshields	“ “ (Chair)
Lesley-Anne MacAskill	“ “
Laura McLean	“ “
Liz Connolly	Management Side
Susan Elston	“ “
Debbie Kerr	“ “
Chris O’Neil	“ “
Alan Ritchie	“ “
Janet Stewart	Staff Side Joint Secretary
Gavin Donoghue	Management Side Joint Secretary (acting)
Michael Boyd	Working Group Officer
Jillian Cheape	Secretariat
Louis Martin	Zoom Administrator
Catherine McCreath	Note Taker

**32/23 Welcome and Apologies**

The Staff Side was in the Chair for this meeting. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. There were no apologies.

**33/23 Minutes of Previous Meetings and Any Matters Arising**

It was noted that the minutes of the previous meetings are still outstanding and will be presented at the next scheduled NJNC – Side Table (Support) meeting.

The Staff Side advised that it has responded to the minute from the meeting on Thursday 9 May 2024 and that it would like to discuss some matters from the Wednesday 20 March 2024 minute.

Matters Arising

The Staff Side asked about the progress of UHI Shetland College becoming a signatory to the National Recognition Procedures Agreement for support staff, referencing a commitment made in the March 2024 meeting to address this offline. The Staff Side also referenced the current Pay Agreement and the importance of UHI Shetland College mirroring the Pay Agreement so that support staff do not suffer detriment in either pay or, more importantly, the No Compulsory Redundancies aspect of the current Agreement.

The interim Management Side Joint Secretary acknowledged the concern and advised it would raise the matter with John Anderson, Management Side Joint Secretary, following his return from annual leave.

The Staff Side queried the status of the Lessons Learned report and the commitment made in March 2024 for a discussion with the Staff Side offline. The Management Side advised that it is anticipated to be on the agenda for the upcoming Central Committee meeting and that the agenda is still subject to agreement by the Staff Side Secretary.

## **34/23 Pay and Terms and Conditions**

### Full and Final Pay Offer

Paper 1 presented the full and final pay offer for 2022-25 for support staff.

### Outcome of Ballots

UNISON confirmed the outcome of the consultation with members to accept the full and final pay offer for 2022-25. GMB and UNITE also confirmed their mandate to accept.

### Options for Implementation of Pay Award If and When Accepted

The Staff Side requested discussion around the National Agreement and the Circular/Implementation Note, specifically guidance for staff relating to lump sum payments and its potential impact.

The Management Side advised that a Circular around the implementation of the National Agreement had been drafted and shared with the Staff Side Joint Secretary the day before and that it was awaiting feedback on that. It proposed to schedule a secretariat meeting to discuss these matters further and asked the Staff Side to specify any particular issues they wished to address during this meeting.

The Staff Side requested that a national approach be taken to implementing and backdating the Pay Award, including those in receipt of the Real Living Wage. It stated that more detail is needed for the implementation note, particularly focusing on the guidance required for lump sum payments and the impact these might have on staff, especially those receiving certain benefits. It also felt there should be guidance on National Insurance and how it might affect payment to staff.

The Management Side advised that a national position could not be agreed as the implementation of the backdating of payments needs to be determined at a local level. It advised a national approach would be challenging due to the diverse scenarios affecting individual staff, which would be better managed at a local level. However, it advised it was open to further discussions with the Staff Side Joint Secretary on this matter.

The Staff Side stated that as the Pay Award is a National Agreement, then there should be a national approach to implementation, and urged for there to be consistency across the sector.

Following some discussion, both sides acknowledged that staff in receipt of certain benefits should be encouraged to seek their own advice from the relevant authorities and that colleges could share information on where to get advice at a local level as soon as possible and should not wait until a Circular is agreed and issued.

The Staff Side acknowledged this position and advised it would consider producing a Frequently Asked Questions document to support its members.

The Management Side requested a response to the draft Circular that was shared with the Support Staff Secretary.

### Job Security

The Staff Side also wished to address matters around Job Security, including the National Agreements on an approach to consultation, job security fund and the avoidance of compulsory redundancies and suggested the formation of subgroups to start work on over the summer period.

It was acknowledged that some of these matters were being reviewed by the Terms and Conditions Working Group, however, the Staff Side proposed exploring alternative routes to advance these discussions.

It was agreed that the Joint Secretaries will pick these up offline as a way forward.

The Staff Side expressed the need to draft a joint approach to present to the Scottish Government regarding the Job Security Fund as this was something that could be done quickly.

### **35/23 Job Evaluation Update**

It was noted that the Management Side advised that a series of informal meetings on Job Evaluation will be scheduled with all support staff trade unions to continue to draft a Project Plan and subsequent Business Case, which will then be considered by the NJNC – Side Table (Support).

The Staff Side emphasised the urgency of advancing this project, particularly given the approaching summer period. It suggested that a dedicated subgroup commence working on the specific details concerning timelines and procedures to ensure that when the broader group convenes, there is a foundational strategy in place to progress matters.

It was agreed that this matter would be picked up by the Joint Secretaries.

### **36/23 Facilities Time**

#### UNISON Release Arrangements Academic Year (AY) 2024/25

The Staff Side sought clarification on the current status of Facilities Time for its members, confirmations for the next Academic Year regarding UNISON release arrangements, and the next steps.

The Management Side confirmed that the current arrangements for UNISON are that it can request the release of five FTE, and reimbursement will be paid to colleges for this release. UNISON was advised that it should contact releasing colleges to agree arrangements directly.

#### UNISON Release Agreement

The Staff Side requested that discussions around indemnity insurance within the Facilities Time Release Agreement recommence to conclude this outstanding area.

The Staff Side was reminded that it was the Support Staff Secretary that requested all work on the Release Agreement be paused and that it was for the Support Staff Secretary to advise further on this matter.

The Staff Side also asked whether there is parity of treatment around the issue of indemnity insurance for all other trade union representatives released from their employing colleges. The Management Side noted that it was agreed previously, by both sides, that any work related to Facilities Time release would be discussed at the Side Tables, however assured the Staff Side that other trade unions are also aware of the indemnity insurance matter.

### **37/23 Schedule of Meetings for AY 2024/25**

#### NJNC Activity – Set Days

The Staff Side felt that the scheduling of NJNC activities needed to be revisited, pointing out the recent history of postponements and cancellations. It suggested establishing consistent days for subgroups and working group meetings to ensure they proceed without the need for postponements, even when some participants are unavailable.

The Management Side advised it is working with the Joint Secretaries to develop a schedule that accommodates all requests and expects to propose this new schedule within the next few weeks.

## Secretariat Meetings

The Staff Side expressed concerns about the effectiveness of interactions with the Central Committee and working groups, noting that the current process for setting agendas, circulating minutes, and scheduling meetings seems to input from the support staff side.

The Staff Side also stated that there is no scheduled support staff secretariat meeting in place before the next Academic Year. It also raised concerns of the make up of the Support Staff Secretariat as previously it had four attendees.

The Management Side committed to establishing a formal schedule of Secretariat meetings for the next Academic Year and maintaining these in the diaries to address concerns. It also noted the option to convene a secretariat meeting promptly if required by the Staff Side.

The Management Side advised that specific concerns from the Staff Side about the Central Committee would need to be discussed directly with the Staff Side Secretaries, Janet Stewart and Garry Ross.

The Staff Side reiterated the need for improvement in NJNC interactions, stating that the current system for the Central Committee was not working effectively.

The Management Side acknowledged the concerns raised and expressed openness to any suggestions that might enhance the operational efficiency of the NJNC.

### **38/23 Date of Next Scheduled Meeting**

An indicative schedule of meetings will be issued by the Joint Secretaries, before the new Academic Year 2023/24, once finalised.

## Action Monitoring Log

<b>Wednesday 8 December 2021</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Status/ Anticipated/ Completion Date</b>
Continue discussions on Job Evaluation Post 2018 Roles.	Joint Secretaries	In Progress
<b>Wednesday 7 December 2022</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Status/ Anticipated/ Completion Date</b>
Continue discussions on the Pay and Grading element of the Job Evaluation Dispute.	Joint Secretaries	In Progress
Consider referring the implementation of Circular 02/21 to the Central Committee for full discussion.	Joint Secretaries	Outstanding – request made to Staff Side Secretaries
Provide a response to the Management Side on Scope.	Staff Side	Outstanding
<b>Wednesday 15 March 2023</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Status/ Anticipated/ Completion Date</b>
Further discussions on the Job Evaluation dispute regarding New and Evolved Roles to continue offline.	Joint Secretaries	Overtaken/Complete
Seek to reach an agreement on Facilities Time with CES members and confirm future meetings to finalise the NRA.	Management Side	Complete
<b>Wednesday 28 June 2023</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Status/ Anticipated/ Completion Date</b>
Forward compliance issues to the Joint Secretaries to allow for an assessment of the situation's scope.	Staff Side	Outstanding
<b>Wednesday 13 September 2023</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Status/ Anticipated/ Completion Date</b>
Hold offline discussions with the UHI Network regarding distant island allowance.	Management Side/Staff Side	Overtaken/Complete
<b>Wednesday 06 December 2023</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Status/ Anticipated/ Completion Date</b>
Outstanding minutes be agreed by Joint Secretaries	Joint Secretaries	Complete
Resume work on a National Policy on Compulsory Redundancy.	Staff Side/Management Side	Complete

The Management Side agreed to speak with HR Strategic Group on whether the concern regarding liability insurance affects other members of staff beyond those on release through Facilities Time.	Management Side	Complete
The Management Side offered to look into arrangements on insurance liability for Staff Members historically and review previous agreements used.	Management Side	in Progress
<b>Wednesday 20 March 2024</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Status/ Anticipated/ Completion Date</b>
Joint Secretaries look at ways to work in a more organised and efficient manner.	Joint Secretaries/Secretariat	Overtaken/Complete
<b>Wednesday 5 June 2024</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Status/ Anticipated/ Completion Date</b>
Seek update from UHI Shetland College regarding becoming a signatory college to the NRPA.	Management Side Joint Secretary	Complete
Discuss alternative approaches for Job Security matters.	Joint Secretaries	Complete
Schedule a series of informal meetings on Job Evaluation to draft a Project Plan and subsequent Business Case.	Joint Secretaries	Complete
Establish a smaller group to commence work needed for Job Evaluation.	Joint Secretaries	Complete