

Agenda Item 4 - Trade Union Facility Time (Termly Update)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Schools' Forum on the current status of the de-delegated fund for trade union facility time.

2. Background

- 2.1 Trade union representatives, and members of an independent trade union which is recognised by the employer, have a statutory right to time off when taking part in trade union activities.
- 2.2 The benefits of de-delegation of trade union facility time and utilising representatives across all schools in Hartlepool has been established and accepted by the Schools' Forum.
- 2.3 The Schools' Forum annually agree if they will de-delegate funding for this budget, or in the case of academies enable them to contribute to this budget. This fund enables schools to recover the cost of supply staff for the release of a trade union representative who undertakes duties on behalf of a recognised trade union across schools and academies in Hartlepool. This is different to local trade union shop stewards / local school representatives who are nominated or elected by their work colleagues in a particular school.
- 2.4 In September 2017, Schools' Forum agreed to pay a daily rate of £200 to reimburse schools who host teaching Trade Union Representatives who provide services across schools and academies in Hartlepool. This remains unchanged.
- 2.5 In 2019/20 the funding was reduced from £2.45 per pupil to £1.25 per pupil for all primary and secondary schools including academies, bringing it well below the mean average spend per pupil across the North East Local Authorities.
- 2.6 In June 2019, Schools' Forum agreed to fund the sharing of non-teaching trade union facility time and contribute to the local authority costs on an annual basis.
- 2.7 Trade Unions have agreed a recording mechanism for time spent in schools which has been formalised following a review with Joint Trade Unions of the Trade Union Recognition and Facility Time Agreement.

3. LA managed Trade Union Facility Time Update

- 3.1 During 2021/22 to date, there has been no facility time request made on the budget and no timesheets submitted by the host school for the NASUWT representative. Based on the time recording system, a charge of £3,000 for the cost of non-teaching trade union facility time is estimated for 2021/22.

- 3.2 The reserve balance relating to Trade Union Facility Time had an opening balance of £17,344 at 1 April 2021. After funding the Hartlepool share of the Designated Education Officer for 2021/22, the reserve currently stands at £1,159.
- 3.3 Schools' Forum agreed they want to move to a Trade Union Facility Time Service Level Agreement (SLA) arrangement. It has been agreed that the current price per pupil will remain at £1.25 for the 2022/23 financial year (1st April).
- 3.4 The Local Authority will review the arrangement once the take up of the buy-back is known.

4. Recommendation

Schools' Forum are asked to note the contents of the report.