

Report of the SNCT Support Group 22 June 2021 and 14 September 2021

Two meetings of the SNCT Support Group have taken place since the last meeting of the SNCT: 22 June 2021 and 14 September 2021. The SNCT Support Group meets as required between meetings of the SNCT. Both meetings were chaired by Des Morris, Joint Chair, SNCT Teachers' Side. The main actions items are noted below for the full SNCT.

1. The National Pay and Leave Specification.

At the June meeting, the SNCT Support Group considered a report which outlined issues and concerns with the National Pay and Leave Specification. Following discussion, the meeting agreed to establish a Technical Working Group to explore these issues further. Powers were given to the Joint Secretaries to draft a remit for the Working Group and to consider its membership. The SNCT Support Group approved the remit at the September meeting.

2. Supply Teachers Portal – Update

The Group was provided with an update on the work on a new portal for the recruitment of all teachers following the decision by SEEMIS to discontinue this facility. This decision will have an impact on almost half the councils who currently use this facility when its functionality will cease in August 2021. It was subsequently reported at the June meeting that SEEMIS would continue providing this facility to Councils until December 2021. At the June meeting, COSLA representatives reported that the requirements of GDPR had provided additional challenges regarding the establishment of a national supply teachers' portal. They also reported that work was continuing at a local level with three preferred suppliers. The names of these suppliers will be provided to the members of the Teachers' Side. The June meeting noted that not all councils would use the new system. At the September meeting, an oral report was provided by COSLA which highlighted the new system was generating improved management reports. The SNCT Support Group agreed to invite a member from the Employers' Team at COSLA to provide a further update on this matter at the November meeting.

3. COVID-19 – Updates and Issues

3.1 Covid Sickness Absence and Long-Covid Temporary Additions to SNCT Handbook

Lengthy discussions on a draft circular took place at the June and September meetings of the SNCT Support Group. However, no agreement was reached on the wording of this draft circular. The major area of disagreement continued to be the date of the backdating for

these provisions to take effect. The matter was remitted to the Joint Chairs of the SNCT to bring the outcome of these discussions to the SNCT on 30 September 2021.

3.2 Compensatory Leave for self-isolation periods during school holidays

Following discussion at the June meeting, the Joint Secretaries were asked to progress this matter further. This Circular has now been agreed and circulated (SNCT 21/79).

4. **Scottish Government Manifesto Commitments: reduction in class contact time**

COSLA and Scottish Government representatives agreed to meet to discuss this item and to bring a scoping paper to the next meeting of the SNCT Support Group in November.

5. **Circulation of SNCT circulars and future SNCT handbook changes**

The SNCT Support Group agreed to recommend to the full SNCT that the Joint Secretaries should dispense with the practice of providing paper copies of Circulars and future changes to the SNCT handbook. Any future changes to the SNCT handbook should be incorporated into the text of future circulars and uploaded to the SNCT website.

The SNCT is asked to approve this recommendation.

Yours sincerely

Simon Cameron (Employers' Side)
Louise Wilson (Teachers' Panel)
Stephanie Walsh (Scottish Government)

Joint Secretaries