



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

LOCAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE: TEACHING STAFF

Minute of Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Stornoway and through Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 12 June 2025 at 10.30am.

PRESENT

Ms Karen Graham (Vice-Chair in the Chair)	Mr Niall Thomson
Mr Calum Maclean	Mr Roderick MacNeil
Dr Frances Murray	Mr Jamie Macleod
Mr Angus McCormack	Mr Sam Jones
Mr Donald A Macleod	

APOLOGIES

Mr Paul Finnegan (Chair)	
Mr Iain M Macleod	Mr George Murray

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Ms Louise Smith	Mr Neil Macleod
Ms Carmen Macdonald	Mr Derek Mackay

MINUTES

Minute of Meeting of 18 March 2025	1	The Minute of the Meeting of 18 March 2025 was approved .
------------------------------------	---	--

The Chair ruled items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 as urgent.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

Neonatal Leave	Care	2	The Chief Executive submitted a Report which detailed the legislative changes relating to employees right to Neonatal Care Leave and Pay. The Report indicated that from 6 April 2025, parents who have a baby admitted into neonatal care up to 28 days old and who have a continuous stay in hospital of 7 full days or longer may be eligible for Neonatal Care leave and pay. This includes fathers and partners of birth parents. The right to take neonatal care leave applies from the first day of work with an employer. These measures will allow eligible parents to take up to 12 weeks of leave, and if eligible, pay, on top of any other leave they may be entitled to, including maternity and paternity leave. In line with legislative requirements of the Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023, a Neonatal Care Leave Policy had been drafted and was appended to the Report.
----------------	------	---	--

It was agreed, insofar as the interests of the Committee were concerned, to:

- (1) note the legislative changes in relation to Neonatal Care Leave and Pay; and**
- (2) approve the Neonatal Care Leave Policy.**

EDUCATION PROVISION

Working Time Agreements	Time	3	The LNCT Joint Secretary (Teaching Staff) submitted a Report which sought approval that the LNCT guidance on Working Time Agreement (WTA) be revisited and updated to ensure that there is consistency across schools in the approach to negotiating their WTA.
-------------------------	------	---	---

It was agreed that the Local Negotiating Committee:

- (1) provide training for TU reps on Working Time Agreement;
- (2) offer Working Time Agreement training to all teaching staff;
- (3) provide training for all senior school managers on Working Time Agreements to ensure common understanding;
- (4) continue to audit WTAs to identify good practice as well as potential problems;
- (5) explore examples of good practice from other Local Authority areas to support improvements to current practice; and
- (6) the Joint Secretaries would meet to consider the arrangements for Working Time Agreements and would submit a Report to the next meeting.

Short Life Working Groups 4

The LNCT Joint Secretary (Teaching Staff) submitted a Report which sought details on the progress of Sub-Committees constituted by the Local Negotiating Committee: Teaching Staff. The Report indicated that there are a number of LNCT Sub Committees and short life working groups in existence at present, and that some of these had not met for a considerable period, while others had yet to meet at all.

The Chief Officers, Education and Children's Services committed to developing a Sub-Committee Programme for 2025/2025 detailing a schedule of meetings, membership and planned activity.

It was agreed that the Chief Officer, Education and Children's Services would develop a Sub-Committee programme of activity for 2025/2026 and share this with the LNCT Joint Secretary (Teaching Side) for consideration and agreement – once agreed the programme of activity would be shared with relevant Sub-Committee members.

PT/Management Remission Time 5

The LNCT Joint Secretary (Teaching Staff) submitted a Report which sought detail on the formula used by the Comhairle for calculating remission from timetable for promoted staff. The Report noted that anecdotally there appears to be significant differences in the teaching commitment of promoted teachers across the authority. The Chief Officer, Education and Children's Services indicated that this was a complex issue which required further consideration and audit across each secondary school in the Outer Hebrides.

It was agreed that the Chief Officer, Education and Children's Services would present the formula for calculating remission time for promoted posts to the Local Negotiating Committee: Teaching Staff meeting of 18 November 2025.

School Term Dates and Mid-term Holidays 2026-27 6

The Chief Officer, Education and Children's Services submitted a Report which detailed the 2026-27 scheme of school attendance and in-service training dates. The Report indicated that the Comhairle is required to set its own school terms, school holidays and in-service training days. The school year covers 190 days for pupils and 195 for teachers.

The Report further indicated the proposed calendar had been issued to schools for consultation with staff and stakeholders on 15 May 2025. Responses from schools have been very slow so further time will be provided to ensure as many views as possible can be considered.

It was agreed:

- (1) to note the School Term Dates; and
- (2) that the Local Negotiating Committee: Teaching Staff would provide any feedback to the Chief Officer, Education and Children's Services by 27 June 2025.

Gaelic Secondary Education – Feasibility Study and Preliminary Consultation	7	<p>The Chief Officer, Education and Children’s Services submitted a Report which detailed the work being undertaken by the Comhairle to explore the feasibility and options to establish a dedicated Gaelic secondary school provision in the Western Isles.</p> <p>The feasibility study has received funding from the Gaelic and Scots unit of Scottish Government and the Comhairle is currently working with Edinburgh University to commission and design the study. It is expected that findings will be known by late Autumn.</p> <p>It was agreed to:</p> <p>(1) note the Report; and</p> <p>(2) note that an update will be provided to a future meeting when the outcome of the feasibility study is known.</p>
Application of Special Leave Policy	8	<p>With reference to item 6 of the Minute of the Meeting of 18 March 2025, the Chief Officer, Education and Children’s Services submitted a Report in relation to the Application of the Special Leave Policy following a Report to the meeting of 18 March 2025, in respect of the application of the provisions for unpaid special leave to work back time in relation to taking time off for dependents.</p> <p>The Report indicated that the Chief Officer, Education and Children’s Services and the HR Manager had reviewed the matter, and the conclusions of the review were detailed in the Report.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <p>(1) that the Joint Secretaries would consider definitions of emergency/critical designations for special leave to support dependents.</p> <p>(2) the HR Manager would submit a Report on emergency/ critical designations for special leave to support dependents to the Corporate Management Team; and</p> <p>(3) the HR Manager would circulate the results from the Employee Engagement Survey. The results from future survey’s would be submitted to the Local Negotiating Committee.</p> <p>REPORTS OUTSTANDING</p>
Reports Outstanding	9	<p>The Chief Executive submitted a Report detailing the Reports Outstanding arising from decisions of the Committee.</p> <p>It was agreed to note the Report.</p>
Date of Next Meeting		<p>The Local Negotiating Committee: Teaching Staff will next meet on Tuesday, 18 November 2025 at 10.30am. The Meeting will be held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Sandwick Road and through Microsoft Teams.</p>