



Agreed Minute of the Meeting of the National Joint Negotiating Committee (NJNC) – Side Table (Support), on Wednesday 15 November 2023 at 1400 hours, via video conference

In Attendance	
Collette Bradley	Staff Side
Martin Clark	“ “
Chris Greenshields	“ “
Audrey Manning	“ “
Sarah Thoms	“ “
Susan Elston	Management Side
Debbie Kerr	“ “
Alan Ritchie	“ “
Derek Smeall	“ “
John Mooney	Staff Side Joint Secretary (Chair)
Heather Stevenson	Management Side Joint Secretary
Jillian Cheape	Secretariat
Louis Martin	Zoom Host
Catherine McCreath	Note Taker

Welcome and Apologies

The Staff Side was in the Chair for this meeting. Apologies were noted from Alison MacLean and John Slaven, Staff Side. There were no apologies from the Management Side.

Pay and Terms and Conditions Claim 2022-23

Support Staff Offer – 2 November 2023

The Management Side sought clarification from the Staff Side regarding the revised pay claim submitted by UNISON in relation to the stance of the other trade unions. There was no representative of GMB present at the meeting.

Representatives from Unite advised that it intended to convene a meeting, subsequent to this meeting, and will update the Management Side of its position once this has taken place.

Concerns were raised by the Staff Side regarding a perceived limited awareness among college principals concerning its counteroffer to the pay offer from last year.

The Management Side advised that the counteroffer was not shared in its entirety with CES to maintain confidentiality within the NJNC, although it was fully discussed at full College Employers Scotland (CES) meetings in October and November 2023.

The Staff Side stated it was referring to its previous claim when it asked the Management Side to decouple the two-year offer and the one-year offer.

The Management Side confirmed that the matter was fully discussed at the CES meetings in October and November 2023, in which all colleges have representation.

Referring to the revised offer made to the Staff Side, the Staff Side expressed concerns about the clarity of the offer, citing information from the CES website indicating that it was a "full and final offer".

The Management Side expressed its desire for the Staff Side to present the offer to its members. It clarified that it did not have the statement on the website in front of them but it is to confirm the current position on ballots and the latest offers made to the Staff Side. It indicated its readiness to address any concerns arising from this clarification, suggesting that if the Staff Side wished to raise concerns, the Management Side would escalate the concerns to the Director of CES as he was not in attendance at this meeting to respond.

The Staff Side stated that the paper provided by the Management Side indicated that it was for consideration ahead of the pay meeting and did not explicitly request the Staff Side to present the offer to its members. Seeking clarification on the offer's status, the Staff Side asked whether the paper constituted a full and final offer.

The Management Side confirmed that the offer was not tabled as a full and final offer.

The Management Side confirmed that its revised offer includes the current full and final offer of £2,000 for Academic Year (AY) 2022/23 and £1,500 in AY 2023/24 with the third year AY 2024/25 offer of £1,500 on all support staff scale points, which would be subject to discussions with Scottish Government on funding.

The Management Side advised there would be no changes to the Terms and Conditions elements of the offer, confirming that there is a commitment of the Four-Day Working Week Working Group which was due to meet tomorrow. It advised that the Terms and Conditions Working Group was progressing with items, and the commitment to Job Evaluation remains. It advised that adjustments were made to the aspect of Job Security following considerations of comments previously provided by the Staff Side. The Management Side advised it could not offer a guarantee of no compulsory redundancies, however, reaffirmed its commitment to collaborative efforts with the Staff Side to prevent such occurrences and stated its commitment that any compulsory redundancies would not be solely attributed to the impact of this Pay Award alone.

Concerns were raised by the Staff Side regarding the guarantee attached to year three of the pay offer, expressing its reservations, due to its reliance on discussions with the Scottish Government. It questioned the potential outcomes of these discussions and expressed concern that the Management Side was proposing something that was uncertain. It emphasised its reluctance to present an offer to its members that lacked certainty or guarantees.

The Management Side acknowledged the lack of a guarantee, however, stressed its transparent communication with the Scottish Government and highlighted Colleges Scotland's Spending Review submission which includes a request for a fully funded Pay Award, which was still pending the Scottish Government's response.

The Staff Side sought an updated workforce reduction figure based on the revised offer and queried potential compulsory redundancies beyond the Pay Award.

The Management Side stated that compulsory redundancies should be a last resort and that there would be efforts from the sector on this matter that align with budget and workforce needs.

UNISON Response to Pay Offer

Referring to its paper, the Staff Side advised that UNISON's revised pay claim was £2,000 for AY 2022/23 and £1,500 in AY 2023/24 and £3,000 in AY 2024/25. Additionally, in its view, the form of words on Job Security provided by the Management Side did not provide a suitable level of comfort for its members.

The Staff Side raised concerns over job security and proposed alternative measures to safeguard against compulsory redundancies. In order for the Staff Side to fully consider the revised offer, specific requests were made for clarifications on costings, differences in funding, and forecasts on compulsory redundancies.

The Management Side requested an adjournment to consider the points raised.

Adjournment

Following an adjournment, the Management Side advised it would share the costings with the Staff Side by the end of the day. The Management Side also stated it would consult the wider CES to seek clarity on various issues, including the status of the year three offer *subject to discussions with the Scottish Government on funding*, in advance of a further meeting with the Staff Side. It proposed to reconvene a meeting with the Staff Side on Monday 27 November 2023.

This was agreed.

Date of Next Schedule Meeting

The next scheduled NJNC – Side Table (Support) meeting is **Wednesday 6 December 2023**; however, it was agreed to have an earlier pay meeting on **Monday 27 November 2023**.