

**Agreed Minute of the Meeting of the National Joint Negotiating Committee (NJNC) – Side Table (Support), on Friday 6 October 2023 at 1030 hours, via video conference**

<b>In Attendance</b>	
Alisdair Barron	Management Side (Chair)
Susan Elston	“ “
Debbie Kerr	“ “
Derek Smeall	“ “
Collette Bradley	Staff Side
Martin Clark	“ “
Chris Greenshields	“ “
Alison MacLean	“ “
Laura McLean	“ “
Heather Stevenson	Management Side Joint Secretary
John Mooney	Staff Side Joint Secretary
Jillian Cheape	Secretariat
Louis Martin	Zoom Host/Note Taker

**Welcome and Apologies**

The Management Side was in the Chair for this meeting. There were no apologies noted.

**Pay and Terms and Conditions 2022-23**

The Staff Side reminded the Management Side of its claim and stated that it was looking for a guarantee of no compulsory redundancies in the sector.

The Management Side reiterated its view that a no compulsory redundancies guarantee would not be possible. The Management Side offered the option of a three-year deal and asked the Staff Side to consider this.

The Staff Side questioned what a three-year deal would bring to the table other than further uncertainty for its members. The Management Side stated that it would offer industrial peace, it allows for other matters to be progressed and that it would guarantee pay for Academic Year (AY) 2024/25 which it thinks staff would see positively.

The Staff Side stated that it may be attractive to some members but only if it is the right deal. It also mentioned the guarantee that the public sector has on no compulsory redundancies and sees a possibility of the same in the college sector.

The Management Side stated that it is trying to meet the aspirations of its staff by giving a form of words that shows that it will protect jobs where possible but that the guarantee would not be possible.

The Staff Side again questioned the attractiveness of a three-year offer for its members as in its view if there is no movement on the guarantee of no compulsory redundancies nothing has changed and it only further complicates job security as it would be asking the Staff Side to take a leap of faith on inflation and the cost of living crisis due to it removing the ability to come back round the table to further discuss pay at a later date. It then stated that the proposal for year three would have to be more than inflation as the current offer for year one and two is not sufficient.

The Management Side stated that its offer for year one and two remains the same and that it would be difficult to know what inflation will look like in year three. It also stated that it would only be in a position to make the year three offer subject to support from the Scottish Government and requested a joint approach be made to fund that element of the pay deal.

The Management Side tabled a three-year deal to the Staff Side. The new offer includes the current full and final offer of £2,000 for AY 2022/23 and £1,500 in AY 2023/24 with the third year AY 2024/25 offer of 3.5% on all salary points, subject to discussions with Scottish Government on funding.

The Staff Side questioned why a three-year deal was being offered when no agreement on no compulsory redundancies has been met. It then asked the Management Side how much funding would be required from the Scottish Government in order to get a no compulsory redundancies guarantee.

The Management Side stated that the Scottish Government has already confirmed that it is flat cash funding for the next couple of years and that no further funding would be made available for year one and two. The Staff Side queried whether the joint request for funding would be for the full offer or just year three. The Management Side stated that trying to get money retrospectively from the Scottish Government is extremely difficult and to get a guarantee of no compulsory redundancies and full funding for the whole pay deal would cost hundreds of millions in recurring funding from the Scottish Government and if it wasn't recurring funding then that would be even more damaging to the sector in the future.

The Staff Side requested figures on how much an offer of 3.5% would be in cash cost to the sector if funding was not made available for year three and how much funding would be required for a no compulsory redundancies guarantee. It stated it could not agree to a deal without seeing the figures associated.

The Management Side responded that it did not have those figures to hand and that they believe a joint approach to government would give a positive result.

The Staff Side repeated that it would require the figures for the offer but was open to discussing a three-year deal if it was of sufficient value and that it would want a commitment to no compulsory redundancies through the lifetime of this settlement.

The Management Side stated that colleges are already budgeting for a pay deal, but it may not be the full 3.5% so it would require anything more to be funded from the government. It also reiterated that the consensus in the sector is to protect the workforce and that they are seeking the best form of words to be able to do so. It noted there were no finance representatives available at the meeting that it would not be able to provide the figures requested but that it would provide them to the Staff Side as soon as possible.

The Staff Side stated that it would need those figures before it could consider the offer tabled by the Management Side and repeated that it would like the figures of job losses to be calculated also to be factored into the funding request from the government. It then requested an adjournment to discuss the offer.

### Adjournment

Following the adjournment, the Staff Side stated that it would require the figures before the next meeting so that the offer can be fully considered.

The Management Side confirmed that it will get the information requested as soon as possible and thanked the Staff Side for considering the offer during the adjournment. It stated that it would welcome comments or a counteroffer and that it would like to meet again soon to continue the discussions. It was agreed that the Joint Secretaries would have discussions offline to confirm a date for a further meeting once the costings have been received.

The Staff Side made a final point that a percentage offer was not acceptable and that it would be looking for flat cash.

The chair thanked all in attendance.

### **Date of Next Schedule Meeting**

The next scheduled NJNC – Side Table (Support) meeting is **Wednesday 6 December 2023**, although an earlier meeting on pay is to be scheduled.