

## LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

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| <b>Meeting:</b>                   | <b>Education Consultative Forum</b>  |
| <b>Date:</b>                      | <b>26 June 2003</b>  |
| <b>Subject:</b>                   | <b>School Improvement: Reform of the School Workforce to Raise Standards and Tackle Workload</b> |
| <b>Key decision:</b>              | <b>No</b>  |
| <b>Responsible Officer:</b>       | <b>Adrian Parker (Senior Education Adviser)</b>  |
| <b>Relevant Portfolio Holder:</b> | <b>Cllr Bill Stephenson (Education and Lifelong Learning)</b>                                    |
| <b>Status:</b>                    | <b>Part 1</b>  |
| <b>Wards:</b>                     | <b>All</b>   |
| <b>Enclosures:</b>                | <b>None</b>  |

### 1. Summary

- 1.1 The proposal for a reform of the school workforce to raise standards and tackle workload is a national initiative rooted in the school improvement agenda.
- 1.2 The reform will take place within a developing statutory and guidance framework, e.g. new teachers' pay and conditions and school support staff development paths, based on the National Agreement.
- 1.3 Schools in Harrow have been effectively reforming the school workforce for many years to enhance teaching and learning. Local reforms are often already beyond the expectations set out in the new national framework.
- 1.4 Reforms of the school workforce over the next few years will build on schools' creative, imaginative and informed vision for teaching and learning.
- 1.5 The DfES envisages a key leadership role for the LEA in implementing the reform initiative and has provided a fully funded Standards Fund grant for the purpose.
- 1.6 Concerns about current and future funding levels of school budgets present a considerable challenge to the envisaged implementation of the proposed reforms.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **The Forum is requested to consider the report and agree the establishment of a Workforce Agreement Steering Group to plan and monitor local implementation of the National Agreement.**

### 3. **Consultation with Ward Councillors**

3.1 Not applicable

### 4. **Policy Context**

4.1 The workforce reform initiative will have policy implications for teachers and support staff, both in schools and employed directly by the LEA.

### 5. **Relevance to Corporate Priorities**

5.1 The workforce reform initiative is an element of the national strategy to raise standards in schools and will contribute to the strategic priority to promote Harrow as a centre of lifelong learning.

### 6. **Background Information**

6.1 DfES published "*Time for Standards*" in autumn 2002. This key document sets the initiative for workforce reform in the wider school improvement agenda and offers a vision of "future teaching and learning" within which reform will be implemented.

6.2 "*Time for Standards*" sets out three key priorities in order to produce, what is envisaged as, a transformational change in the school workforce:

- I. more time during the school day for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA);
- II. a concerted attack on bureaucracy that gets in the way of effective teaching and learning;
- III. extra support inside and outside the classroom.

6.3 The National Agreement (January 2003) which developed from the proposals in "*Time for Standards*" and was signed by all relevant professional associations and trade unions, apart from the National Union of Teachers, includes a national seven point plan for creating time for teachers and headteachers.

- I. A progressive reduction in teachers' overall hours over the next four years.
- II. Changes to teachers' contracts, to ensure all teachers, including headteachers:
  - do not routinely undertake administrative and clerical tasks (from September 2003);
  - have a reasonable work / life balance (from September 2003);
  - have a reasonable allocation of time in support of their leadership and management responsibilities (from September 2003);
  - have a reduced burden of providing cover for absent colleagues (from September 2004), and;
  - have guaranteed planning, preparation and assessment time within the school day, to support their teaching, individually and collaboratively (from September 2005).
- III. A concerted attack on unnecessary paperwork and bureaucracy for teachers and headteachers.
- IV. Reform of support staff, defined as all adults working in school other than teachers, roles to help teachers and support pupils. Personal administrative assistants for teachers, cover supervisors and high level teaching assistants will

be introduced.

- V. The recruitment of new managers, including business and personnel managers, and others with experience from outside education where they have the expertise to contribute effectively to schools' leadership teams.
- VI. Providing additional resources, at an estimated cost of £1 billion to employ an extra 10,000 teachers and 50,000 extra support staff, and national "change management" programmes, to help school leaders achieve in their schools the necessary reforms of the teaching profession and restructuring of the school workforce. These resources are included in the three year budget projections made available to the LEA by DfES.
- VII. Monitoring of the progress of the initiative by the signatories to the agreement through Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG).

6.4 Although now being refined, this national action plan is now being implemented through various developments:

- I. Changes to teachers' pay and conditions implementing those changes planned for September 2003 have been set out in this year's School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document;
- II. Consultation has taken place on:
  - proposals for the introduction and qualification standards of the High Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA) grade;
  - a proposed framework for teacher and support staff relationships. This addresses the issues of what work High Level Teaching Assistants might be asked to do in schools and of the management and supervision of those assistants, and;
  - the development of alternative career development routes and appropriate qualifications for support staff. Three such routes are envisaged, broadly pedagogical, e.g. towards High Level Teaching Assistant grades; behaviour & guidance, e.g. trained counsellors, and; administration and organisation, e.g. school bursars.

6.5 The DfES has set out a clear role for the LEA in the reform initiative in several areas:

- I. leadership in developing a vision with schools for teaching and learning and associated staffing structures;
- II. support to schools, headteachers and governors, especially in change management;
- III. informing schools about the initiative and disseminating good practice, including the outcomes of the national Pathfinder project which is piloting aspects of workforce reform in 32 schools across the country, including Newton Farm First and Middle School in Harrow LEA;
- IV. liaising with the DfES, the Learning & Skills Council, the National College for School Leadership and local consultative groups.

A two year and fully funded Standards Fund grant has been made available to the LEA to undertake this role.

6.6 In Harrow, it is proposed to establish two steering groups:

- I. a cross-departmental officer group to provide coherence to the LEA approach to the initiative, and;
- II. a wider group – the Workforce Agreement Steering Group - that will plan and monitor the local implementation of the initiative. The steering group will report to the School Improvement and Effectiveness group (SCIE) and will include

headteacher, teacher, teaching assistant, high school manager, governor and trade union / professional association representatives.

## 7. **Consultation**

- 7.1 The local proposals have already been discussed at the School Improvement and Effectiveness group (SCIE) and the LEA Departmental Joint Committee (DJC). Discussion at ECF is the final element of initial consultation with representative headteachers, school staff and governors. Future consultation will be through the Workforce Agreement Steering Group, reporting to SCIE.

## 8. **Finance Observations**

- 8.1 Extra resources for schools to implement the proposed reforms were identified as part of the medium term budget strategy. However there is currently considerable concern in schools nationally and locally about the financial implications for school budgets in doing so. Officers from Education Financial Services are working with representative headteachers to identify current and future pressures on those budgets. The financial implications of the proposed reforms need consideration as part of those discussions.

## 9. **Legal Observations**

- 9.1 Changes in contracts, job descriptions and conditions of service are proposed in the National Agreement. Education Personnel Services and Harrow Legal Services will provide advice and support to headteachers and governing bodies in implementing these changes.

## 10. **Conclusion**

- 10.1 Schools in Harrow have for many years been developing staffing structures, staff training programmes and working conditions to provide effective teaching and learning opportunities for their students. The proposed reforms present an important opportunity for schools to further develop and modernise their workforce in order to further raise standards and reduce teacher workload. Concerns about current and future funding levels present a considerable obstacle to the envisaged implementation of the proposed reforms.

## 11. **Background Papers**

- 11.1 "Time for Standards: Reforming the School Workforce" (DfES – 2002)  
Reference: DfES/0751/2002 or [www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/remodelling](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/remodelling)

## 12. **Author**

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