



Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association

SSTA Newsletter

JANUARY 2014

BULLETIN OF THE SCOTTISH SECONDARY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Reports from October and December Council

Subscriptions 2014

Motions

The following motions have been passed

Motion 1

Council recognises the importance for local authorities and independent schools of maintaining the highest levels of security for all electronic data pertaining to young people.

Council therefore recommends to employers that an encryption process is used which is both secure and affordable and does not have a negative impact on the day to day work of teachers.
(October)

Motion 2

Recognising that the vast majority of local authorities are already paying for retrospective PVG checks, the SSTA calls on COSLA to adopt this approach in all local authorities.
(October)

Motion 3

SSTA members applaud the action that the Acting General Secretary has taken to ensure that the rights and interests of LGBT pupils and teachers are being protected and promoted in Scottish Schools.

Members urge the Acting General Secretary to continue his efforts in progressing the interests of LGBT community.

(December)

The following motion was remitted to the Education Panel:

Given that in many schools, teachers are continuing to develop and make changes to courses at N3, N4 and N5 levels, the SSTA urges Local Authorities to allow subject departments within the schools to choose whether they wish to present pupils in the new higher or continue to present in the current higher in 2014

(December)

Reports

Various reports were given at Council in October:

1. The Acting General Secretary gave updates on the following issues:
 - a. Appointment of General Secretary
 - a. Pension negotiations
 - b. GTCS election
 - c. Meeting with Cabinet Secretary

In addition the Acting General Secretary reported on a meeting with Ken Muir, GTCS at December Council.

2. The Convener of Salaries and Conditions reported at October council on the progress of salary negotiations, pension negotiations, the Review Group on loss of conservation and changes to compensatory sick leave. He further reported at December Council on the lack of progress on salaries and the result of the Pension Survey.

3. Various other reports were heard on the use of Mobile Devices in Schools (Peter Wright), Education Panel and ASN Panel.

New Panel Members

The following members have been elected as new Panel Members:

Salaries and Conditions of Service Committee:
Andy Sinclair and Tony Zerebiec

Senior Managers' Advisory Panel:
Gordon West

Equalities Committee:
Susan Thorburn and Joan de Cecco

Education Committee:
Sean Tolland, Catherine Miller, Ruth French and Alison Karalar

The General Treasurer informed Council that subscriptions would be frozen at 2013 values despite the increase in inflation.

The annual subscription will be £166.10 for all members who pay their fees by 31 January 2014. This reduced tariff includes annual direct debit, cheque, part-time, job-share and retired members. This saving is clearly of advantage to members and is only available to those who pay before the end of January.

Members who have elected to pay their subscription by annual cheque are reminded that these should be forwarded by 31 January 2014, either through school representatives or directly to the Association offices. The rates for 2014 are as follows:

Full members £166.10 if paid annually by 31 January 2014, or £181.20 if paid afterwards; £15.10 (£7.55) if paid by monthly direct debit.

Retired, part-time, job-share, temporary or supply members: £83.05 if paid annually by 31 January 2014 or £90.60 if paid afterwards; £7.55 per month if paid by monthly direct debit.

Members who pay annually by cheque are encouraged to transfer to annual Direct Debit. This method not only considerably reduces workload for both school representatives and office staff but clearly benefits members by the reduced rate. Paying by Direct Debit guarantees that the payment will be taken in time to obtain the discounted subscription. Direct debit instruction forms for are available to download from the website at www.ssta.org.uk/ddi or by contacting the office.

Scottish Union Learning Conference

Professional officer Richard Goring and SSTA President James Forbes attended the 6th Annual Scottish Union Learning Conference during November.

The theme of the Conference this year was "The Diversity of Learning".

The Conference was addressed by:

- Angela Constance MSP, Minister for Youth Employment
- Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary
- Ewart Keep, Chair in Education, Skills and Training, Department of Education, University of Oxford



The third annual Scottish Union Learning Learner of the Year Award was presented during the Conference to Paul Mitchell, a member of UCATT.

Senior Manager Seminar

The Senior Managers' Advisory Panel is holding a Senior Manager Seminar. The Seminar is an all day event, which will take place on Saturday 15 March at The Westerwood Hotel, Cumbernauld, and is free to SSTA members.

The theme of the seminar will be "Professional Update and Senior Managers."

Should members wish to attend the seminar they can register for a place by completing the registration form

www.ssta.org.uk/smseminar no later than Monday 3 March 2014. Alternatively you can contact the office for an application form.

Further information regarding the Senior Managers' Advisory Panel can be found on the Association website at www.ssta.org.uk/smap

To Pay or Not To Pay Fiona Dalziel, Professional Officer

Since the 2011 "Agreement" and the introduction of school closure days some councils have started to make errors when calculating final pay for members who are transferring or retiring. As far as the SNCT are concerned no change was introduced in 2011 which would warrant alteration of the way final salaries are calculated. They have made this clear in several letters to local authorities.

In 2012 a couple of councils refused to pay members beyond the end of July as the days in August were considered "school closure days". After fighting for several months the councils paid up. This year the same thing happened but with different local authorities. Despite several communications clarifying the situation one authority resolutely refused to pay and even lied in emails about how they calculated salaries. Only at the end of

November, after considerable pressure, did members eventually receive their outstanding salary.

Teachers have historically been paid approximately half a month's salary in the August of their commencement of employment then 11 months full salary with the balance of their annual salary due the following August. On retirement or transfer to another employer, as long as they have worked the full school year, members are entitled to full pay for the month of July and the balance of any outstanding annual salary in August.

However, some authorities have now started paying a full salary in the August of a teacher's commencement, so they would only be entitled to pay up until the end of July on leaving, i.e. twelve equal payments. The claim is that this makes it simpler for their payroll system.

Confusingly, because not all authorities are doing this, members can end up with the balance of their annual salary from their previous employer plus a full month from their new employer or only two weeks pay in total in August, depending on where they are working.

COSLA, a group of local authorities and the Unions are trying to sort the situation and we are hoping for clear, unambiguous guidelines to emerge so that members are treated consistently no matter for which authority they work.

If you think you have been under or overpaid for any reason please get in touch.

The pay unsettlement: a gift horse with its teeth knocked out?



Euan Duncan
Convener Salaries and Conditions of Service

Nobody can have missed the fact that, as far as pay matters go, recent years have been very unsettled. With costs rising all around, including additional pension contributions, public sector workers have seen the gap between income and expenditure widening.

Although, in 2011, the government agreed to maintain teacher numbers we have seen workload rising dramatically. It's not hard to work out why: new exam arrangements, the challenges being experienced by local authorities seeking to make ends meet and a critical shortage of supply teachers.

2011 also saw the arrival of three reports:

- 'McCormac', described at the time as a Trojan horse for Scotland's teachers with the potential for huge changes in working conditions;
- 'Donaldson', reviewing teacher education - the consequence of which has been the introduction of 'Professional Update';
- An OECD report revealing the fact that Scots teachers spend more time in class than most of their counterparts in the developed world.

While the third report told us nothing new, the first two reports were discussed at length within SSTA committees and at SSTA Council and Congress. Standpoints and action plans were drawn up; SSTA representatives became involved in negotiations through SNCT working parties, standing shoulder to shoulder with negotiators from other unions. At each stage negotiators reported progress to SSTA committees and to SSTA Council.

One by one the Trojans within McCormac were picked off until negotiators felt that they had reached a stage at which the threat had been neutralised and in fact could, in certain circumstances, be an opportunity. SSTA Council received the final report on McCormac negotiations and agreed that an acceptable position had been reached with no requirement for

a ballot. This was confirmed by delegates at the annual Congress in May 2013.

Meanwhile, in the background, pay negotiations were stumbling around. Early in the year COSLA had pre-empted the Teachers' side of the SNCT by offering a 1% rise for 2013/14 before a pay claim had been made. The Teachers' side raised the question of supply and it was linked in to the pay claim; COSLA did not accept that rates of pay were the root of the problems of finding supply teachers (which, of course, have also been affected by the government's aspiration to reduce numbers of unemployed teachers by restricting places for teacher training).

There was no movement before the summer with the Teachers' side regularly hearing COSLA's stated position, that any changes to pay had to be 'cost neutral' and that if the Teachers' side wanted supply teacher rates to be improved then, in COSLA's view, it would have to come out of the 1% offer. COSLA also made it clear that to fund the 1% offer it was seeking additional flexibility in working and that continued funding of Chartered Teachers' pay would be dependent on acceptance of the negotiated position on McCormac, which by this point had SSTA acceptance. It was clear that to restore pay for supply teachers would probably cost around £3.5m, money which COSLA did not have.

Everybody went away for their summer holidays and a fresh academic year brought a government cash injection to improve the situation for supply teachers together with an additional offer of 1% for 2014/15. Included in the small print of the offer was the expectation that the teachers' side should accept the final negotiated position on McCormac.

The SSTA's Salaries and Conditions of Service Committee recommended that the offer should be accepted; this was ratified by the SSTA's Executive Committee at the end of August and accepted by Council at the start of October. Then the offer failed through no fault of the SSTA which had stated its position clearly.

Members were informed by letter of progress towards pay settlement; some asked why there had been no ballot. In response SSTA employees and representatives explained that no ballot had been requested by members at district, area or national meetings at any point leading up to the pay offer.

What next? We all hope that by the time members receive this newsletter the pay deal will have finally been settled. However, workload continues to intensify, the shortage of supply staff is at a crisis point (some local authorities are even sending officers back to schools to teach -

TESS 13.12.13) and local authority finances are looking bleaker than ever.

There is no point in standing back asking 'what's the SSTA doing about it?' - WE are the SSTA and we can only improve things through showing that we care about the future of our profession and the young people we teach. This is a time for members to get involved in whatever way they can, whether it be attending their local meetings (usually 4 a year), responding to requests for feedback (the recent pensions survey had only a disappointing 19% response) or just encouraging colleagues to join the SSTA.

The real Trojan horse is not McCormac but the exhaustion we are all experiencing. We need to squeeze out our last few ounces of energy and, with one united voice, put them into making things change for the better.

Links and terminology

McCormac Report: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/920/0120759.PDF>

Donaldson Report: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/337626/0110852.pdf>

OECD Report: <http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/48631419.pdf>

SNCT: Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers, a tripartite body comprising members from teaching organisations, local authorities and Scottish government www.snct.org.uk/

SSTA Executive: a small body of members elected from Council to direct the SSTA

SSTA Council: the main ruling body of the SSTA which comprises elected delegates, all secondary teachers drawn from Areas and Districts in every one of the country's 32 local authority areas

SSTA Congress: the ultimate ruling body of the Association - it is a meeting of Council together with members drawn from every local authority area in Scotland to debate and direct SSTA policy.

Member Services

The SSTA is in the course of reviewing all its member services. It is clear that as a trade union we should provide as wide a range of services as we are able to. We have thus negotiated a number of new services and benefits which you can review in the following pages. We intend to negotiate more services for members and we would be interested in the views of members as to what additional benefits we could provide. Feel free to give your opinion at info@ssta.org.uk. Please mark the email F.A.O General Secretary.



Car Purchase: Tollcross Garage has arranged a scheme for SSTA members to purchase new or nearly-new cars at specially discounted prices; credit and trade-in facilities available. www.tollcrossgarage.co.uk



Competitive Car rental prices from National Car rental and Guy Salmon Prestige Rental.

Full details available at www.ssta.org.uk/services



Benevolent fund: The Association maintains a Benevolent Fund which is used to assist members or their families in case of need.



www.saferinternet.org.uk 0844 381 4772

email: helpline@saferinternet.org.uk

UK Safer Internet Centre aims to address all online safety issues faced by all professionals and volunteers in the UK who work with children and young people.



To access any of these services (other than employment advice which is always accessed through the SSTA directly) telephone **0800 081 2207**



Estate and Inheritance planning telephone **0845 450 2408**



All Financial needs around retirement, pensions and investments. Telephone SSTA Office **0131 313 7300**

Further details of all member services can be found on the Association website at www.ssta.org.uk/services



Money worries?



The SSTA Finance Committee recently invited Payplan to give a presentation on its services and the potential benefits to our members. Here the organisation outlines the services it offers to individuals who may be experiencing financial difficulties.

At Payplan, we've been helping people with money problems since 1992.

From guidance about budgeting and cutting everyday costs to ongoing support throughout a debt plan, we're here to make life easier for you.

Nobody's situation is exactly the same so we make sure we take time to understand our clients' concerns and priorities. Some of the people we help are worried about keeping their home, others want to clear unsecured debts or reduce the costs associated with everyday living.

We recognise that there's no "one size fits all" solution to managing debt so we're dedicated to offering advice tailored to your life and circumstances – whatever your situation, we'll have a solution.

We specialise in providing tailored advice and guidance for residents in Scotland and we offer debt plans that mean you only make one affordable payment every month which we distribute to your creditors. Some even allow you to write off a proportion of your debt. Depending on your circumstances, you can choose from a variety of ways to take back control of your money.

If a structured debt plan isn't for you, we can help you explore downsizing your home, remortgaging or releasing equity to boost your income. And while you're dealing with your debt, we'll provide you with access to deals on things like everyday insurance and essential household goods to help you save money. We understand that being in debt affects every part of your life so we'll make sure you have everything in place to protect what matters most – your job, your home and your family.

You don't need to join up as a member or pay a subscription – as a leading provider of free debt help, advice and debt solutions in the UK, our service is open to everyone. Instead of charging fees, we are funded by members of the credit industry who recognise the value of what we offer – a sustainable solution for challenging times.

As our client, you can be confident about the support you will receive, knowing that we will focus on helping you maximize your income, reduce your expenditure and manage your money effectively.

"My decision to choose Payplan was to change my life, your teams have dealt with my situation from the onset with compassion and understanding – never talking down or making me feel uncomfortable when I was in a position of little pride and embarrassed about my situation. All of my questions were answered and dealt with professionally, with exceptional knowledge of the process and the guidance given was always correct and reassuring to steer me through some worrying times – there was always a kind ear to listen and then advise.

I would and will recommend your service to anyone who may be unfortunate enough to find themselves in the predicament I was in; your teams gave me a "light at the end of the tunnel" in what were dark times!"

Payplan client July 2013

Find out more by calling us now on **0800 716 239** or visit our website at **www.payplan.com**

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Member Services



The Insurance Scheme for SSTA

As an added benefit to your union membership, SSTA in conjunction with Alan Boswell Insurance Brokers have secured a new and improved insurance package underwritten by one of the UK's leading Insurers.

The cover provides damage to private vehicles, loss of personal possessions including bicycles and spectacles, loss of money and a range of benefits for personal accident.

Claims notification should be made direct to the brokers on 01603218099 to include membership number and full details of the loss. Following verification of membership renewal and policy cover, claims for personal possessions will be settled within 5 working days

Summary of Covers

Personal Accident

Type of Loss	Benefit On Duty	Benefit Off Duty
Death	£10,000	£2,000
Total and permanent loss of all sight in one or both eyes	£10,000	£2,000
Total loss by physical severance or total and permanent loss of use of one or both hands or feet	£10,000	£2,000
Total and permanent disablement from engaging in or attending to usual business	£10,000	£2,000

In addition the policy will include:

- Dental Benefit - up to £200 per member following assault or accident during occupation
- Hospitalisation - £50 per member per day up to a maximum of 365 days
- Coma benefit - £50 per member per day up to 365 days
- Paraplegia or Quadriplegia - up to £25,000 per member for home improvements or relocation following Accidental Bodily Injury resulting in paraplegia or quadriplegia
- Rehabilitation Expenses - up to £10,000 per member for rehabilitation expenses following payment of Permanent Total Disablement

General All Risks

Item Description	Territorial Limit	Sum Insured	Excess
Malicious Damage to any Private Motor Car or Motor Cycle (including accessories), licensed for Road use, owned by a member of the Union or the spouse, or legal partner of such a member	Within the boundaries of any members place of employment in the United Kingdom depending on the union	£500 any one claim	£50
Personal possessions the property of members or for which they are responsible, including text books, instruments and equipment pertaining to the teaching profession and bicycles	Within the boundaries of any members place of employment in the United Kingdom	£300 any one claim	£15
Members Spectacles	Within the boundaries of any members place of employment in the United Kingdom and whilst accompanying any outing, journey or visit connected to employment	£300 any one claim	£15

Money

Item Description	Territorial Limit	Sum Insured	Excess
Money the property of members or for which they are responsible	Within the boundaries of any members place of employment in the United Kingdom	£150 any one claim	£25

The information provided is a synopsis of the insurance only

Annual Worldwide Travel Insurance for The Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association

Now with greatly enhanced cover for REAL peace of mind -
Family Cover* Just £94 - payable by quarterly instalments of £23.50

Following this year's unprecedented disruption to many people's travel plans, your SSTA Annual Travel Policy has been significantly enhanced to offer greater protection for you and your family:

ADDITIONAL COVER NOW INCLUDED

- Natural disasters e.g. volcanic eruption, tsunami, hurricane, fire, flood, earthquake etc.
- Outbreak of food poisoning or infectious disease
- Disruption due to travel advice from Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)
- Full Winter Sports Extension (previously £20 per year, per policy)
- Increased protection when booking not made through a travel agent
- Enhanced delay benefit
- Enhanced missed departure cover

For an application or immediate cover call

0845 230 1653

See policy document or call for full cover details / exclusions.

*Family Cover means subscribing member, their cohabiting partner and any number of their dependent children aged under 21 years, all normally residing together in their family home.



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STOP PRESS

URGENT REMINDER

Please ensure your details held by the Association are updated. This is essential since there may be an election for General Secretary very shortly. Members can update their details by going to www.ssta.org.uk/updatedetails and completing the form or by emailing info@ssta.org.uk

How to contact the SSTA

By mail:

Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association

West End House

14 West End Place

EDINBURGH

EH11 2ED

By e-mail at: info@ssta.org.uk

Or for urgent issues by telephone on 0131 313 7300