

Facility Time - What does it mean in Shropshire?

Having produced a large paper on Facility time in all its detail from for Schools Forum this short paper focuses on the position in Shropshire.

Drawing out the major points as to how the facility time is used and benefits employer/employee relationships in Shropshire.

Unions have met regularly with HR to prepare and finalise policy documents. This has included Pay, Appraisal and capability. Work is planned for Disciplinary, Grievance, Fixed term contracts, Harassment and Bullying, and Paternity policies. This is cost effective way of a small group producing complex documents for schools to adopt, thus saving time and money for all concerned.

Unions may also be involved in working with groups of members in schools to resolve issues. These may be formal or informal. These can include workload, health and safety issues.

For individual members union may be supporting formally and informally. Formally it may be at capability meetings or returning from sickness meetings. In some cases the informal may take a considerable amount of time giving advice and it is never noted that the unions had any input because the member acts on that advice and resolves the issue in school.

So in terms of cost what does this mean ?

For unions to meet with HR regularly we are talking 12 meetings a year, so NUT, NASUWT, ATL, NAHT, ASCL, UNISON AND GMB need to be released to attend these meetings. For the 5 teaching representatives this means 5 days (bearing in mind that the detail required for the meeting requires research - so each meeting of a half day accounts for half a day research—in the case of some work this may actually be a lot more but taking that figure as a guide. $12 \times 5 = 60$ supply days = 0.3 FTE

To examine data for all other aspects of union's duties is not so simple as the duties are complex. Although working to outline provision of a total of FTE from previous agreements which totalled 1.5 FTE is should be noted that considerably more time is actually spent. So the outline cost would be in the region of $1.5 \times 36,800$ plus 20% on costs 55,200 plus 11040 = 66,050 projected --- does not include UNISON and GMB

Actually claimed so far this year (for 6months)

NUT 60 days 0.308 FTE

NASUWT 60 days 0.308 FTE

ATL awaiting election of county rep their claim could be 24/195 0.123 FTE

NAHT 12 in 4 months would be 12/195 FTE so likely to be 18 days 18/195 0.092 FTE (working on 195 working days in a year for supply salary calculation)

ASCL have not claimed.

Total claim from teaching unions in the order of 0.708 FTE . using an overall salary of up to £36,800 \times 0.708 = 26,054 plus 20% on costs equals £31,264

This projects to £62,528 for the whole year bearing in mind that this could be more in the event of greater casework or the equivalent of releasing approximately 1.5 FTE.

So what has happened in that time ?

The figures given here are a guide as the role of union representative at county level is quite complex. These are given in good faith to give a flavour/ account for how the time is used from the NUT secretary for a 6 month period.

24 - Formal meetings with HR on policies supporting all schools.

3 - Other collective meetings including Health and Safety.

12 - Meetings in schools for groups of members.

23 - Meetings of individuals for individual issues such as redundancy, return to work, appraisal/capability, disciplinary currently 50/50 split between primary and secondary.

1163- Incoming phone calls and emails, emails including policy updates, education updates e.g. Primary curriculum, member queries and casework.

Some phone calls deal with complex issues and may take an hour.

840- Outgoing emails.

188.5 Hours on admin and research for policies, casework, and educational initiatives linked to employment conditions.

It is not an easy role to break down into facts and figures some of the work such as policies can be planned but what also demands attention is the issues raised in the running of schools which will appear on an ad hoc basis. What is certainly true is that more time is used than is claimed in the interests of employees and employers in Shropshire Educational establishments. The provision of pooled facility time makes a worthwhile contribution to good employment relationships in Shropshire.

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