

Ulster Teachers' Union Annual Conference 2010



education



A SOUND INVESTMENT

CONFERENCE REPORT

Slieve Donard Hotel, Newcastle

Thursday 18th March ~ Friday 19th March 2010

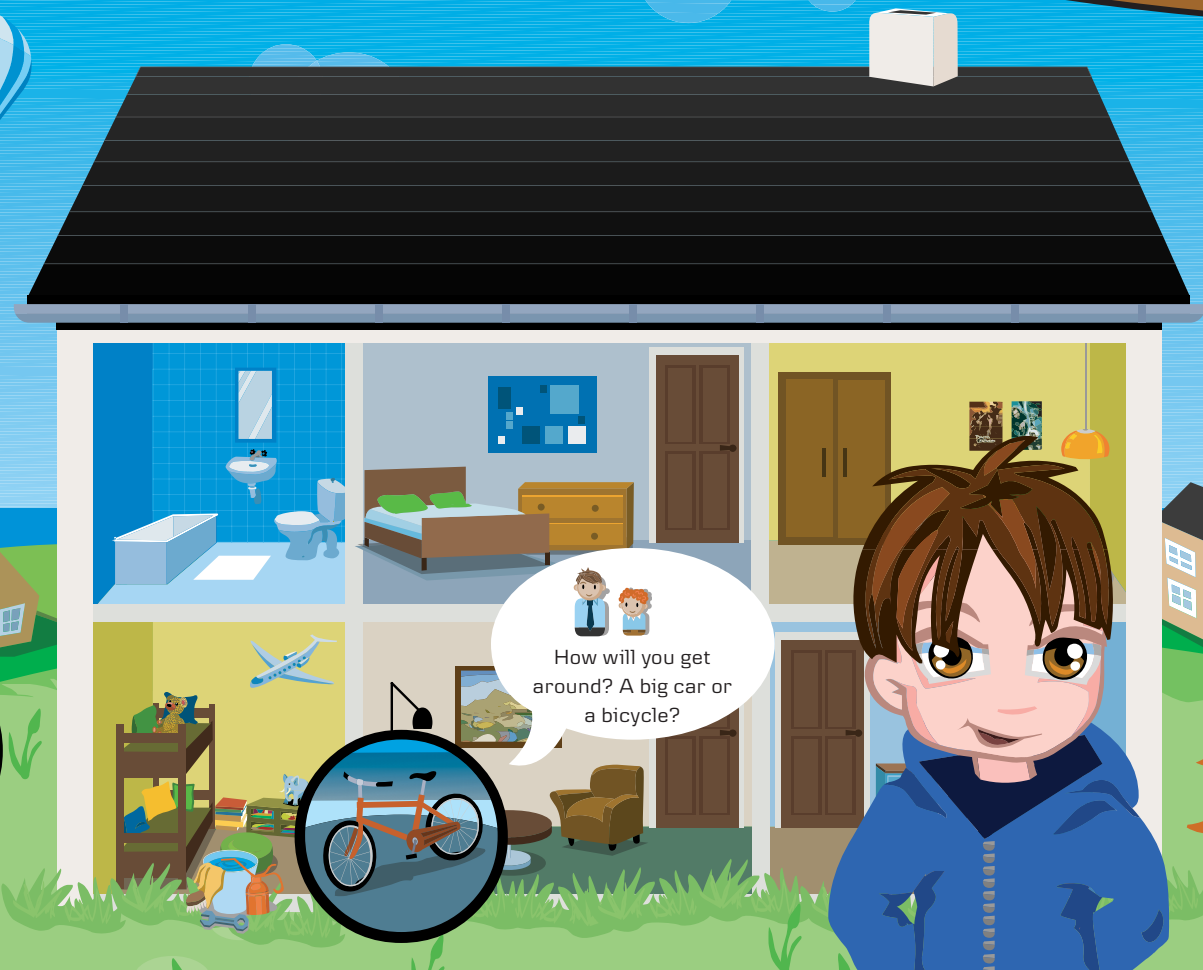
MONEYVILLE

Where will you send your family on summer holiday?

Will you live in a house or a castle?

Which pet will you choose? A dog or a hamster?

How will you get around? A big car or a bicycle?



Visit www.moneyville.co.uk now

www.moneyville.co.uk is a fun and educational virtual town for children aged 5-10.

Why not visit Moneyville and try the many fun games and activities? You can learn about the value of money, and how you can save to buy the things you would like. Why not answer the sum to get across the bridge and enter the Family Game? Here players select a family and help them make ends meet in everyday life.

Northern Bank

Northern Bank Limited. Registered in Northern Ireland No:R568. Registered Office: Donegall Square West, Belfast, BT1 6JS. Northern Bank Limited is a member of Danske Bank Group. www.northernbank.co.uk



CONFERENCE THEME
“Education — A
Sound Investment”

All information contained in this Report was deemed correct and up-to-date at time of going to press, but the Ulster Teachers' Union cannot be held responsible for any genuine errors or omissions that may have occurred. Copyright Ulster Teachers' Union © 2010

ULSTER TEACHERS' UNION **91st Annual Conference**

Report of the Central Executive Committee

For the year ended 31st March 2010

18th ~ 19th March 2010

at the

Slieve Donard Hotel, Newcastle, Co Down



Ulster Teachers' Union

94 Malone Road, Belfast, BT9 5HP

T: 028 9066 2216 **F:** 028 9068 3296 **E:** office@utu.edu **W:** www.utu.edu



Avril Hall-Callaghan, B.Sc., M.Sc.
General Secretary, UTU

GENERAL SECRETARY'S FOREWORD

March 2010

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a very unsettled year for Education in Northern Ireland. The uncertainties surrounding the political institutions did little to promote confidence and the predictions of severe economic cuts ahead have been adding to the feelings of uncertainty about the future. With the agreement on Policing and Justice in place let us hope that our politicians can now move forward to deal with the issues that affect schools and teachers, such as Transfer and the establishment of a single employing authority.

The Ulster Teachers' Union has continued to campaign vigorously on behalf of members despite the prevailing economic and political circumstances. While finances within schools are restricted nevertheless we have been able to make some advances in conditions of service issues. All the 'family friendly' procedures have been up-dated and we have worked closely with the Department of Education on developing guidelines for schools on Tackling Violence Against Teachers.

Through closer working relationships with all the organisations representing

teachers we have ensured the best possible outcomes for members on collective issues, making joint presentations to the Minister for Education and the Assembly Education Committee. We have continued to work diligently on behalf of individual members who have sought our advice or assistance.

The President and Central Executive Committee play a vital role on your behalf, taking policy decisions between Conferences. The following Report gives an overview of the important work carried out in the past year. I hope you will enjoy reading it and if you have any queries or require further information on any aspect of the Union's work then please do not hesitate in contacting me.

This Report will be made available on the Union's website for the information of all our members. Please encourage the teachers in your school to read it. I hope it may inspire some to become more involved in influencing decisions that ultimately impact on them.

Avril Hall-Callaghan
General Secretary

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	4	15. TEACHER UNITY	47
2. UTU MEMBERSHIP	6	16. UTU MARKETING	47
3. HEAD OFFICE STAFF	12	17. BRITISH AND IRISH GROUP OF TEACHERS' UNIONS (BIGTU)	48
4. TEACHER EMPLOYMENT	14	18. STANDING CONFERENCE ON PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION	50
5. NITC	15	19. STANDING CONFERENCE ON SPECIAL EDUCATION	50
6. TEACHERS' NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE — SALARIES & CONDITIONS	20	20. CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (CEC)	51
7. TEACHERS' NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE — JWP.....	21	21. SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE CEC	52
8. TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE	28	22. UTU REPRESENTATIVES ON EXTERNAL BODIES	54
9. TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION WORKING PARTY	30	23. HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS AND TRUSTEES	56
10. IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS	32	24. UTU REPRESENTATIVES ON CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES	56
11. REPORTS FROM CEC SUB-COMMITTEES	33	25. ATTENDANCES AT MEETINGS OF THE CEC	57
12. LAW AND TENURE	40	26. CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS 2009	58
13. UTU BENEVOLENT FUND	46	27. THANKS AND APPRECIATION	59
14. A SELECTION OF OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED BY CEC	46		

1. INTRODUCTION

The General Secretary, Avril Hall-Callaghan, presents the Annual Report of the Central Executive Committee for the period from March 2009 to March 2010.

The year has been a busy one with all four Officials and the President fully engaged in a wide range of issues. This Report summarises the main areas of the Union's work, both in representing members on an individual and a collective basis.

It has been a difficult year with three issues dominating the agenda. Firstly, the Education and Skills Authority (ESA). This body, due to come into being on the 1st January 2010, has still not been implemented due to a failure by the politicians to put in place the required legislation. Up until November 2009 the Minister for Education was insistent that the January implementation date would be met and much effort went into preparations for the transfer of functions to ESA. The fact that the implementation date has been postponed for the third time has increased scepticism about the planned reforms.

The second issue which has created concerns has been Transfer 2010. Some schools ignored Department of Education advice and instead supported the use of Entrance Tests. This led to huge difficulties for Primary Schools in attempting to manage parental expectations whilst adhering to the delivery of the Revised Curriculum. All five teaching unions issued common advice to schools at various points during the year and the situation has been monitored each month by the Central Executive Committee.

Funding of Education is the third issue which has been of major concern in the past year. The failure to implement ESA and thereby effect the promised savings that the rationalisation of administration was supposed to produce (in the order of £20 million) has put strains on the overall budget. This was further exacerbated by the cuts to the Education budget announced in January 2010 by the Finance Minister.

The Teachers' Side of the Teachers' Negotiating Machinery (TNC), the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) has been attempting to negotiate a way through the difficulties schools face in the current economic climate but this work has been very much overshadowed by the spectre of budget cuts and hindered by the uncertainty over who the future employing authority might be. The work of the NITC is described

in Section 5 followed by a report of the work done by the Joint Working Party (JWP) in Section 7 and the TNC in Section 6.

As always the UTU has been heavily involved in supporting teachers through redundancy and redeployment. During the early part of 2010 agreement was reached with the employing authorities on an amended redundancy procedure to assist schools.

In August 2009 approximately 200 teacher jobs were declared redundant. Whilst the vast majority of redundancies were resolved by voluntary means nevertheless the process was particularly difficult for schools facing staff cuts this year due to attempts by the Department of Education to change the rules. A full report of the meetings of the local Teachers' Superannuation Consultative Committee as well as the meetings held in London of the Teachers' Superannuation Working Party which includes representatives from all parts of the United Kingdom are to be found in Sections 8 + 9.

The UTU interacts with many other organisations in the course of its work, including a range of unions representing other workers. The UTU is affiliated to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) and takes an active role in all aspects of its work, with many CEC members taking a very keen interest in the sub-committees of ICTU as well as attending the Annual Conference. Section 10 gives further detail on this.

The work of the UTU would be impossible without the members' commitment to the policy-making structures within the Union. Sub-Committees are made up of CEC Members along with members nominated by the five Area Associations. This ensures that there is democratic involvement of members across NI and that a full range of views from all sectors and levels of education can be assessed. The work of these committees has increased considerably in recent years due to devolved government and its consultative processes. Reports from the conveners of these committees can be found in Section 21.

Law and Tenure is the Section of this Report that many teachers turn to first. It describes the individual casework that the Union undertakes on behalf of members which is reported to the CEC on a monthly basis. The UTU provides legal advice and

support to members that is second to none. The General Secretary has a postgraduate qualification in Employment Law and the Field Officers regularly attend high-level training courses on differing aspects of the Law. There is no doubt that the amount of casework has increased substantially in recent years.

The UTU Benevolent Fund continues to provide financial support to members in need, including the valuable Death Grant payable when a member dies in service. At the time of going to print there were no calls on the Fund during the 2009/2010 year.

During the year the CEC met monthly and discussed a wide range of topics, taking policy decisions where necessary. In Section 14 many of the topics that arose during the year in question are listed.

Teacher Unity remains a goal for UTU and during the past year relationships between the teaching unions have improved. Section 15 describes the steps taken to create a more harmonious climate. The teaching unions within Great Britain and Ireland form a strong group within the international arena. They meet on a regular basis and details of these meetings can be found in Section 18.

The UTU is unsure at this point what effect, if any, the proposed transfer of functions to ESA might have on the existing negotiating and communication structures. UTU believes that the work of the Standing Conferences is very important and should continue regardless of any other changes there may be. Reports of the two existing bodies can be found in Sections 18 + 19.

Section 20 through to Section 24 lists the names of those who have been involved at a central level in representing members' views, either internally or externally, during the last twelve months. Section 23 includes the names of those who hold Office at a Senior level, either as Honorary Vice Presidents or Trustees of the organisation. Some of the names included in this section are new this year, as vacancies were created by the sad passing of a number of long-standing UTU stalwarts in the previous year.

Finally, at Section 26 there is a report on the progress made since last Conference on the business debated a year ago followed by some words of thanks to those who have assisted the CEC in its work during the year. Further information on any aspect of the following Report can be requested through the General Secretary.

2. UTU MEMBERSHIP

During 2009/10 the Ulster Teachers' Union offered membership to qualified teachers in all sectors, providing that they were registered with the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTC NI). This amendment was introduced into the Rules and Constitution at the 2008 Annual Conference and ensures that the UTU remains a professional body representing solely teachers' interests.

The UTU also provides Associate membership to members of the Association of Educational Psychologists (all of whom are qualified as teachers). This means that the UTU provides professional assistance, including legal advice, to any AEP member who requires it. This arrangement is a long-standing one and the new AEP General Secretary, Kate Fallon, is to meet with the UTU General Secretary in early 2010.

The Union's total membership, including approximately 100 AEP members, stood at approximately 6400 at the end of December 2009. This was despite yet another year of teacher redundancies and a very low number of newly-qualified teachers obtaining jobs. Given the dire predictions of budget cuts ahead, recruitment will be ever more important as numbers in the teaching force decline.

Membership Officers, Denise Allely and Meriel Higgins, continue to play a very important role in supporting the recruitment work and they work closely with the Field Officers to ensure that visits to schools are planned and co-ordinated. Lindsay Osborne, Clerical Officer, has increased involvement with recruitment literature and activities.

Annette Morrow, Senior Clerical Officer, is responsible for the day to day updating of the membership database. Annette is often the first point of contact for teachers seeking membership of UTU. Annette, along with Clerical Officer, Lindsay Osborne, deal with all membership enquiries in an extremely friendly and competent manner which has been noted by many members and prospective members.

The very successful sub-groups set up to focus on school leadership (Leadership Forum) and newly-qualified teachers (FIT Group) continue to grow, with Jacquie Reid supporting the work of the FIT committee. Jacquie and Lindsay both assisted in co-ordinating and attending the Young Teachers' Conference in Fermanagh.

This year's President, Lexie Scott, has continued the work done by previous Presidents in encouraging new principals to become active members of UTU. Lexie ran a very successful Leadership Conference in partnership with Kevin Smyth of INTO.

The joint training sessions held for newly-qualified teachers and for school representatives continue to be popular. One element of the training programme that is usually oversubscribed is the series of Retirement Seminars run through Platinum Financial Services. In 2009/10 these seminars were once again offered to INTO members as well and the UTU is indebted to Johnny Scott of Platinum who works alongside the UTU Field Officers to provide comprehensive advice to members on all aspects of retirement and financial planning.

Headquarters staff provide a service that is unrivalled for members through:

- **Advice to individual members by telephone, fax, e-mail and mail;**
- **Regular mailings to school representatives and news bulletins providing up-to-date information**
- **Reports on a wide variety of topics through the UTU website, school mailings and UTU News**
- **Personal advice on issues such as salaries, pensions, terms and conditions of service, collective procedures, appeals procedures, tribunals, legal claims and defences, and statutory entitlement, for example to maternity, paternity, adoptive and carer's leave;**
- **Advice to members on appointments, promotions and salary appeals;**
- **Advice on retirement and pension options (provided through Platinum Financial Services).**

The Officials, including the General Secretary, have responded to requests to meet with members through school visits, home visits or interviews at Headquarters.

All Officials are from time to time involved in giving advice and/or representing members at Grievance Procedures, Disciplinary Procedures and increasingly, at Bullying and Harassment Procedures. Mediation has been included as an option prior to the formal procedure commencing and the UTU recommends that Labour Relations Agency mediators are used as this is perceived to be a more independent process.

The UTU continues to provide first class legal advice to members through its solicitors, Sean Dickson Merrick. UTU has a long association with this firm which has an excellent track record and vast experience of working within the education sector.

The following publications were updated as necessary and circulated to members either by post, through the school representative or distributed at student recruitment days:

- **“Your First September” booklet**
- **UTU Services & Benefits**
- **UTU Policy statement**
- **UTU Application form**
- **UTU Membership Subscription rates**
- **Early Professional Development leaflet**
- **Health and Safety booklet**
- **“Why Join UTU?” booklet**
- **UTU Year Planner**

This year’s major mailing to schools in August was very ably co-ordinated by Lindsay Osborne who liaised with printers to ensure that everything was despatched on time for the important September recruitment drive.

The Field Officers, assisted by the Membership Officers and the Clerical Officer, attended at recruitment events in the following institutions:

School of Education, Queens’ University, Belfast
 Stranmillis College
 St Mary’s College
 University of Ulster, Coleraine
 University of Ulster, Jordanstown

Once again this year UTU has recruited jointly with INTO and this is proving to be a very good way of presenting materials to a wider student base. The benefits of belonging to a local union are becoming more and more apparent and students seem to like the idea that the two unions are working together.

The Field Officers, assisted by the Membership Officers, planned a programme of school visits to ensure that those newly-qualified teachers who had managed to obtain employment were persuaded to confirm their UTU membership.

The UTU is very fortunate to have Field Officers and lay members who are willing to work so conscientiously, often working anti-social hours in order to ensure that members’ needs are met. The 2009/10 year was marked by an increased incidence of queries regarding premature retirement due to the uncertainty of the future of the scheme.

In addition, retirements and the transfer of some Education & Library Board staff to the Education and Skills Authority in advance to assist in the implementation of the new body has created gaps in the employing authorities support structures which the UTU Officials attempted to plug. This placed additional pressure on the work of Headquarters at a time when a plethora of initiatives in schools and uncertainty about the future of the education system was already having an impact. Nevertheless, the UTU staff worked tirelessly to ensure that members were given advice, support and assistance whenever it was required.

SENIOR FIELD OFFICER’S REPORT – Mike Graves

As in recent years casework continues to occupy a large proportion of the Senior Field Officer’s time. Last year there was the looming possibility of compulsory redundancies as a direct consequence of teachers not volunteering for premature retirement due to the removal of pension added years and the uncertainty of the enhanced severance payments resulting from the confusion surrounding the Redundancy and Premature Retirement Compensation Regulations. By the spring there was the possibility of four compulsory redundancies and each of the members concerned was supported and represented through the stages of the Redundancy Procedure. By the summer two redundancies were saved, one through promotion and the other by an offer of alternative employment. The remaining two cases were taken to independent appeal at the Labour Relations Agency. Both were similar in that the Board of Governors were seeking to identify the needs of the school in

terms of management and curricular responsibility and paid scant regard to the length of service and experience of the teacher facing redundancy and the quality of teaching this experience brought to children's education. In the event one appeal was upheld and the other was unsuccessful.

In the case of the teacher who obtained alternative employment, the school used religious grounds as one of the criteria for redundancy selection. This matter was taken up by the UTU Solicitor and Counsel and the case has now been taken forward by the Equality Commission to the Fair Employment Tribunal.

The SFO was also the Trade Union Representative on several LRA appeal panels for cases brought by INTO and NASUWT.

The SFO also represented members in both Primary and Post-Primary schools at a number of hearings held under the Disciplinary, Attendance and Unsatisfactory Teacher procedures. The SFO was also called to schools to provide support to members including Principals. In several instances it was necessary to include Board Officers at these meetings. School visits were also made to provide advice on issues including school closures, premature retirement, grievance and inspection.

The SFO attended meetings of the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council throughout the year as well as deputising for the General Secretary at the JWP and the NIC-ICTU Education Trade Union Group. The SFO also co-chaired a joint meeting of UTU/INTO CEC and Northern Committee as well as regular meetings of the Joint Board. Other NITC activities included the Flexible Working Group which led to the revision of the Job Share, Career Break and new procedures for Flexible Working and Temporary Variation of Contract. There were meetings with Katrina Godfrey to respond to the draft policy document, Every School a Good School as well as an emergency briefing with Katrina and CCEA to deal with a malfunction of the InCAS software in relation to standardised scores. An NITC workshop with ETI and a joint DE/DEL launch of the Advice and Guidance Strategy were also attended.

In the late summer the SFO held a meeting of members from Whitehouse Primary School to hear difficulties resulting out of the arson attack at the school. The SFO contacted the NITC secretary to establish a joint NITC approach and was asked to organise a meeting with NEELB Chief Executive, Gordon Topping. The SFO chaired this meeting and presented a series of requests of an urgent nature. NEELB responded sympathetically and asked that a paper be drawn up outlining what was

needed. The NITC secretary asked for the paper to be adopted as the NITC position, which was agreed by the UTU members at the school, and that the Permanent Secretary should be involved as there were urgent outstanding matters such as extra Exceptional Closure Days which required DE approval. The SFO was pleased to receive a card of thanks signed by all the staff.

The SFO was involved in several conferences and seminars during the year. These included the national NASUWT conference at Bournemouth, the Northern Ireland NAHT conference, a seminar on promoting gender equality within teacher trade unions and the teaching profession in Brussels and a meeting with senior LRA staff and non-teaching unions. The joint working relationship with INTO was also strengthened with joint seminars aimed at Newly Qualified Teachers and a series of Pension and Financial Planning seminars in conjunction with Platinum Financial. The SFO continued as Convenor of the Political and Equality Sub-Committee as well as representing the UTU at several Equality Commission meetings and events and two meetings of the Joint Consultative Forum with presentations from Gavin Boyd and Bob Collins Chief Commissioner of the Equality Commission. Along with other the other Field Officers the SFO attended training seminars provided by the Equality Commission and the LRA.

The SFO continued to support the Membership Officer with the UTU web site including the attendance at UTU IT strategy meetings. The SFO designed the PowerPoint for the UTU conference.

FIELD OFFICER'S REPORT – Jacquie Reid

It has certainly been another busy year at UTU HQ! The following report outlines my contribution to the work that has taken place.

Within UTU

The UTU exists, of course, to work on behalf of the members so priority is given to the needs of individual and groups of members as they arise. As a Field Officer I therefore carry out many visits to members and deal with members' queries and issues by telephone.

Visits this year have fallen into various categories. I have carried out pre-arranged school visits both in response to requests and also to ascertain what the current issues are in schools and how the Union may respond to these. It has further been a priority this year to visit schools which have newly-appointed members of staff for

recruitment purposes and also to offer support. Some of these visits have entailed talking to all members of staff at a meeting and others have been set up by School Representatives to facilitate members having individual consultations.

Representation is a key role and I have accompanied and represented members this year in various stages of grievance procedures, a salary appeal and a PSNI investigation. Liaising with outside bodies can also lead to the resolution of issues: this year these have included the Pensions and Salaries Branches of the DE, ELBs, GTC and NISTR.

Within UTU I have sat this year on the Conference and Political and Equality Sub-Committees and have acted as Field Officer and minute-taker on CEC. I have been involved in the update of recruitment materials and have been responsible for Equality Matters, Meet the School Rep and other articles in the UTU News. I have also liaised with Provincewide to launch a new insurance deal for teachers. I have responsibility within UTU for students/recently-qualified teachers, Health and Safety and, more recently, nursery schools. I have attended meetings of our FIT (Future in Teaching) Group this year and given support to the Chair, Stephen Savage, where required. As a result of his work we hope to have a considerable number of young delegates at Annual Conference this year, the FIT Group are presenting a resolution to Conference and plans are in place for a range of upcoming activities. I congratulate Stephen and his committee on their work and success here. For Health and Safety I have attended conferences relating to Men's Health and general workplace issues, and an awareness-raising campaign on nursery issues is underway. Further details of work in these areas are included later in the report.

Professional development is very important and, with other members of staff, I have attended training in Food Hygiene and Safety, Fire Safety and First Aid through the Heart Start programme. I have also attended a number of seminars held by the Labour Relations Agency to keep abreast of developments in Employment Law.

UTU/INTO

Our close working relationship with INTO is reflected in many areas of the Union's work. The following are those in which I am directly involved. UTU/INTO carry out joint student recruitment and, with Brendan Harron of INTO, I have this year attended the recruitment fairs for first-year students in Stranmillis, PGCE students in QUB, UUJ and UUC in September/October and fourth-year recruitment fairs in Stranmillis and St. Mary's in February. There has been a welcome

upsurge in contact from students this year and I have been dealing with issues around vetting, recognition of qualifications and EPD; the General Secretary, Senior FO and myself also held a seminar in UUC on Teaching and the Law in June.

Brendan and I also carry out joint School Reps' training and a two-day course took place in Ballymena in April. In preparation for the next round of training I sent a questionnaire to all UTU Reps to establish training needs and location; the response was very positive. A further two-day course is planned for Lurgan at the beginning of March. We further ran a seminar for Newly-Qualified Teachers in August and I was the FO in attendance at the Joint Retirement and Financial Planning Seminar in Ballymena.

I worked with Mark McTaggart from INTO, in conjunction with recently-qualified teachers, to organise and facilitate a joint UTU/INTO Youth Conference which was held in the Killyhevlin, Enniskillen in November. The conference, which was held over two days, was well-attended and lively. It dealt with the role of the union and issues raised by the teachers themselves and led to a resolution which is due to be taken to the conferences of both unions in the near future. A joint committee will get underway soon to organise next year's conference.

NITC (Northern Ireland Teachers' Council)

Although I do not have a seat on the NITC I am called upon to represent individual members and the NITC as a whole when necessary. I have substituted for members as required this year both at the Council itself and at a variety of meetings including the NISTR (Northern Ireland Substitute Teachers' Register) Working Group, negotiations on the School Closures' agreement and the Equality Impact Assessment on Transfer 2010. I am also the NITC representative on the Taskforce for Travellers' Education and have attended meetings of the full taskforce and sub-committees plus a conference in Malahide.

Outside of the NITC the teaching unions continue to lend support. I represented the UTU at the launch of the Civic Voices project facilitated by NASUWT in Draperstown in December and an event held during Pride Week aimed at raising awareness of homophobic bullying in schools. I also attended the ATL National Conference in Liverpool in April.

ICTU (Irish Congress of Trade Unions)

UTU are affiliated to the ICTU and I have represented the UTU this year on a number

of ICTU Equality Committees including the Strategic Implementation Committee, Women's Committee, LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) Committee and Equality and Human Rights Committee. Details of the work of these committees are included in the ICTU Equality section of the Conference Report.

ICTU also offer free training to affiliates. I completed my year-long Diploma in Employment Law in September and a ten-week Stage 1 Health and Safety Course from September to December. I have attended a range of Employment Law seminars in the Equality Commission in areas such as Atypical Workers and Equal Pay and also took a two-day Women in Leadership course in November.

I further represented, with others, the UTU at the May Day Rally and was a speaker at the Coleraine Rally against Public Sector Spending Cuts in November.

Outside agencies

Other outside agencies appreciate the teaching unions adding the voice of teachers to projects and research and I have been involved in a number of these situations this year. I participated in a round table discussion for NICEM (Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities) around research into the experiences of children from ethnic minorities in schools and another for the BURC (Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre) on the development of educational material on the United Irishmen. I have been involved with Stranmillis College in an ongoing project to attract more males into the teaching profession and attended a conference in QUB around using research to improve children's lives.

ETUCE (European Trade Union Committee for Education)

With the General Secretary, I attended a two-part conference on Teacher Stress, in Brussels in February and Athens in October. The purpose here is for the teaching unions of Europe to learn from each other and to form a united front and lobby at European level for improvements in conditions for all teachers. The report has yet to be published but one of the key factors which emerged was the effect on health of class size, an issue which is now being taken up by unions across the continent. As part of this, I received training in Brussels in using an information-sharing forum on the web, and was a rapporteur for a working group in Athens.

I am presently involved in the ETUCE research into cyber-bullying of teachers. I contributed on behalf of UTU to the research and ETUCE wish to use some of the NI material in their pack as examples of good practice. I will be attending the conference on this issue in Brussels in March.

Through the work with ETUCE, UTU received an invitation to attend a conference in Cyprus on the topic of The Role of Government in Education. I have submitted a paper on Democracy and Education and will be presenting it at the conference in March.

I have also taken two information workshops this year on the education system in NI as part of a study visit for teachers from throughout Europe.

EI (Education International)

On behalf of UTU, I completed a research questionnaire on the gender balance in the structures of teaching unions. This has been recognised and welcomed.

FIELD OFFICER'S REPORT – Audrey Stewart

During the past year, the UTU telephone has been very busy with members ringing to seek advice and support on a range of issues including retirement, redundancy, flexibility of working arrangements, leave of absence, parental complaints and pupils with behavioural problems. Legal assistance sometimes has to be sought with the more intricate problems.

School visits have been an important element during the year, as it is important to not only visit schools on request to answer members questions but to also visit schools where we have members.

A range of training courses such as Equality Law Seminar, Age Discrimination, Bullying In the Workplace, Taking The Fear Out of Handling Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures and The Role of The Labour Relations Agency have been attended.

As a member of The Women's Committee of ICTU, I was involved in a drama presentation, highlighting disability. The drama was performed in front of delegates at The Disability Champions Conference, which was held in Belfast. I also attended a "Women In Leadership" Conference in Monaghan and was included in the group of ladies, who attended a reception, hosted by Mary McAleese in Dublin. As convener of Education & Policy Sub-Committee and also of International Relations Sub-Committee, a number of items and issues, referred by CEC have been considered. Indeed the SEN & Inclusion Consultation Policy has played a major role with UTU during the past 6 months. Many meetings have taken place, which I have

attended in my role as UTU official, in an effort to achieve the best possible result for our members, who are working at the chalk face.

The UTU/INTO Leadership Conference was a very successful event, at which I presented an overview on the present situation regarding the SEN & Inclusion Consultation. It was an opportunity to raise awareness of the work carried out by officials on behalf of members.

3. HEAD OFFICE STAFF

Avril Hall-Callaghan, who has worked for UTU since 1981, has been General Secretary since 2004. She was re-elected unopposed for a further 5 year period, as required under the Industrial Relations legislation, from 1st August 2009.

Avril has been closely involved in negotiations regarding the transfer of staff to ESA, being a member of the Education Sector Joint Forum along with colleagues representing the administrative, clerical and manual staff in the employing authorities and schools. Avril has held the position of Vice Chair of the Northern Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (NIC/ICTU) for four years and in May 2009 was re-elected Chair of the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council.

Avril is a member of the Industrial Court, sits on the Interreg Monitoring Committee and an Interreg Steering Committee and is a member of the Professional Conduct Committee of the Bar Council. While her role as a negotiator at a strategic level has expanded greatly in recent years, nevertheless she still engages in a substantial amount of casework, as is evidenced in the Law & Tenure section of this Report.

Ray Calvin, ex-General Secretary, officially retired in September 2009 but has offered to continue his work archiving the records of the Union on a voluntary part-time basis. The UTU wishes to place on record its sincere thanks to Ray for this very important work. During 2009/10 Ray has continued to rationalise the vast amount of paperwork that has accumulated in recent years, ensuring that only the essential records are kept in hard copy. This was of particular importance as the UCU expanded the area it now rents from UTU and some re-organisation of storage was required.

Mike Graves, Senior Field Officer, has been with the UTU since September 2002 and has taken on an increasing role in undertaking legal and tribunal casework on behalf of members. Mike chairs the Political and Equality Sub-Committee of the Union and directs the recruitment campaign. He represents the UTU on the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council and deputises for the General Secretary at central negotiating meetings when required. Mike also oversees all aspects of technology within Headquarters, including the web-site, ably assisted by Membership Officer, Denise Allely.

Jacquie Reid, formerly a teacher in Millburn Primary School, Coleraine, was appointed Field Officer in September 2008. Jacquie is heavily involved in all aspects

of recruitment, particularly the work of the Future in Teaching (FIT) Group, and organised a very successful joint conference for young teachers along with INTO in October 2009. She has an interest in all areas of Equality but her main responsibility is for Health & Safety. Jacquie sits on the DE working group on Traveller Education, is a very active member of a number of sub-committees of NIC/ICTU, and is working with the NI Council for Ethnic Minorities in developing strategies that will be of benefit to teachers. Jacquie is taking on an increasing amount of casework to ensure the needs of members are met.

Audrey Stewart was appointed to a permanent position in UTU in July 2009. Audrey is the former Principal of Olderfleet Primary School in Larne and has wide-ranging experience of senior management issues. Audrey, along with Mike, has developed the Leadership Forum and contributed to the very well-attended Leadership Conference held jointly with INTO in January 2010. Audrey's main responsibility is in the area of Pensions but she is also engaged in recruitment and casework. Audrey is Convener of the Union's Education and Policy Sub-Committee and was responsible for the UTU response to the Special Needs Review consultation, a major piece of work. Audrey has been an elected member of the General Teaching Council, NI, for the past 4 years.

Karen Taylor, Executive Officer, is the office manager and ensures that all matters pertaining to the Headquarters Building are in order, particularly with respect to Health and Safety. During the summer period, 2009, Karen project-managed the refurbishment of two offices, converting one from a storage area into a very bright, functional workspace. Karen liaises with many external service-providers on behalf of UTU and oversees the office budget.

Financial Executive Officer, Ann McHenry, continues to manage the financial affairs of the Union in a meticulous manner. Ann not only deals with the day-to-day management of finances, but is involved in managing the investment funds, a task which she carries out very successfully. She works closely with the Union's Honorary Treasurer, George McVeigh, and with the Union's accountants.

Denise Allely, Membership Officer, has taken on additional responsibility in assisting Ann with the accounts, particularly in relation to the joint working with INTO. Alongside this Denise still continues to support the Field Officers in recruitment, is involved in the redundancy consultation process and provides superb technical IT support. In January 2010 Denise commenced research on the IT needs of the Union in preparation for a major investment in updating the Union's hardware and software.

Meriel Higgins, Membership Officer, assists the Field Officers in communications to schools and provides support to the Leadership Group. She takes a lead role in the redundancy consultation process, monitoring the early stages of the process and in particular the selection criteria. Meriel co-ordinates office requisitions and provides administrative support to the General Secretary.

Senior Clerical Officer, Annette Morrow plays a key role in the day-to-day operation of the Union. Annette maintains the database and is often the first point of contact for UTU members in need of assistance. Annette assists the Officials in managing casework, and deals with many of the routine queries that members may have in a friendly and efficient manner, ably assisted by Lindsay Osborne, Clerical Officer.

Lindsay has taken on an increasing role in managing the communications with the FIT Group and she attended the Young Teachers Conference in October, providing essential administrative back-up to the Officials. Lindsay also plays a central role in co-ordinating the major recruitment mailing that goes into schools in August.

Gloria Marshall, the Union's Caretaker, takes good care of not only the Headquarters building, but the staff who work in it. Gloria ensures that the increasing number of visitors to Headquarters are provided with refreshments and that the building is looking its best at all times, both inside and out.

The General Secretary wishes to place on record her own personal thanks and the thanks of the Central Executive Committee for the loyalty and commitment of all the staff at Headquarters. They all "go the extra mile" to ensure that the Union's functions are professionally performed at all times and UTU members should be assured that the service they provide is second to none.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

The UTU continues to place a high priority on the professional development of its staff and the benefits of this are evident in the level of service that they provide to members. All the Union's Officials are qualified, experienced teachers who hold additional higher level qualifications in the areas of Education, Research and Law. Their professional knowledge is updated through a variety of methods, from formal study to attending seminars locally, nationally and internationally.

The ICTU provides a range of local training courses on various aspects of industrial relations which are of immense benefit. These courses are provided free of charge

through membership of ICTU, a significant consideration given that if accessed commercially the costs could be prohibitive. The ICTU courses attended by Officials during 2009/10 included:

- Diploma in Employment Law
- Health & Safety Stage 1
- Women in Leadership
- Age Discrimination
- Atypical workers
- Equal Pay

In Autumn 2009 the Labour Relations Agency initiated a very useful programme of seminars on a range of industrial relations issues. Several of these seminars were accessed by the Officials and the Executive Officer and proved very worthwhile.

The Senior Field Officer attended a seminar on Promoting Gender Equality in Teaching in Brussels in May 2009 and the General Secretary and Field Officer, Jacquie Reid, attended a seminar on Teacher Stress in Athens in September 2009. These seminars were fully funded by the ETUCE and gave Officials the opportunity to participate in learning about the latest strategies at European level. The General Secretary was also invited by the United Nations High Commission to the Durban Review Conference in Geneva in April 2009 as a guest speaker on Human Rights.

The clerical and administrative staff also accessed training courses as follows:

- Sage Levels 1 + 2
- GCSE Maths
- City & Guilds shorthand
- Disability Champions
- ECDL Stages 1 + 2

In addition, the normal internal Training Days took place. On 19th June 2009 most of the staff undertook training which prepared them for their Level 2 Award in Food Safety, a very useful qualification in terms of Health & Safety. All those who sat the written examination passed and received their certificates. On 26th August 2009 and 1st September 2009 internal training on Collective Procedures took place for the Officials, which proved useful given the recent changes in many of the negotiated agreements.

On 11th November 2009 a representative from Heart Start delivered a training session in the morning on procedures to be followed with suspected heart attacks. In the afternoon all staff updated their training in fire safety, including a practical session on the use of various types of fire hydrant.

4. TEACHER EMPLOYMENT

The General Teaching Council (GTC NI) each year produces a Digest of Statistics. The comparative figures for teacher employment in 2009 are as follows with the 2008 figures in brackets:

The total number of GTC registered teachers is 27,776 (27,237). This includes teachers who may have retired prematurely from permanent posts as well as teachers on secondment to other agencies. Of this total only 24.54% (24.72%) are male, a continuing and very worrying downward trend. The total number of teachers employed in grant-aided schools and registered with GTC(NI) is 20,185 (19,802) which shows a slight increase in overall teacher numbers despite almost 200 redundancies.

The breakdown of permanent and one year temporary contracted teachers by sector is as follows:

	2008	2009
Nursery	205	210
Primary	8199	8364
Secondary	6174	6174
Grammar	4343	4544 (inc Prep)
Special	881	893

The breakdown per Board area is as follows:

	2009	2008
BELB	3721	3799
WELB	3530	3570
NEELB	4367	4479
SEELB	3844	3883
SELB	4340	4454

In 2006 there was a net decrease of 400 teachers in total but this had decreased to only 15 fewer teachers overall in 2007, an indication that the predicted disastrous demographic downturn was by no means guaranteed. In 2008 the net decrease was only 9 teachers and in 2009 the total number of teachers employed has increased by 383. This is good news for declining school rolls and it is speculated that much of the changing trend is due to migrant workers' children.

5. NORTHERN IRELAND TEACHERS' COUNCIL (NITC)

UTU was represented on the NITC during the year 2009/10 by the President, Lexie Scott; the Vice President, Lewis Love; the Ex-President, Melanie Houston; the Senior Field Officer, Mike Graves; the General Secretary, Avril Hall-Callaghan.

The NITC is the Teachers' Side of the negotiating machinery in Northern Ireland and the current Constitution allows the recognised unions a maximum of five representatives on the basis of one representative for each 1,000 members or part of 1,000 members. UTU qualifies for 5 seats, as does INTO and NASUWT. ATL holds 3 seats and NAHT holds 1 seat, with an agreed additional seat for an observer.

Following a period of time when NASUWT and ATL had not been participating in the NITC the Irish Congress of Trade Unions became involved in a conciliation exercise to try to move things forward. The conciliation process commenced in April 2008 but after a very promising start the process faltered towards the end of that year.

In January 2009 Peter Bunting, ICT Assistant General Secretary, arranged a meeting in the Wellington Park Hotel which was attended by all the recognised teacher unions. This was followed by a further meeting in the Wellington Park on 19th March 2009 at which agreement was reached on a revision of the Constitution of the NITC. The basis of the agreement was a commitment to consensus working for the first two years.

The first meeting of NITC following this agreement was held on 1st May 2009 and the following agreed statement was issued in August 2009:

Northern Ireland Teachers' Council – Joint statement issued following the mediation process undertaken by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions

Teachers unions, who have been in dispute since late 2006 over the issues of both salaries policy and on the decision making processes within the Council, have now resolved their dispute.

The Northern Ireland Teachers' Council was formally reconstituted on 1st May 2009, and will operate henceforth on the basis of consensus.

The first substantive meeting took place on 18th May.

The new office bearers of the Council are:

Avril Hall-Callaghan (Chair)
Seamus Searson (Secretary and spokesperson for salaries)
Frank Bunting (Vice Chair and spokesperson for Conditions of Service)
Mark Langhammer (Minutes Secretary)
Fern Turner (Treasurer)

In an agreed statement, the five teacher unions commented

“With the setting up of a single teachers' employer, the Education and Skills Authority, there exists an excellent opportunity to play a genuinely influential role at the heart of education policy. We intend, and expect, to be a strong influencer of the new Authority through collaborative working. Our recent joint study visit – with the Department of Education and the ESA Implementation Team – to Montgomery County, Washington, DC, was a recent demonstration of our determination.

The recommendations to move towards parity in pay and conditions – as contained in the 2004 Curran Report – remain a major challenge in trying economic circumstances. The five teaching unions do not under-estimate the challenges in making progress on this front, but pledge our collective resolve to secure the best deal possible for the teaching profession going forward.

Finally, we would put on record our thanks to Peter Bunting and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions for their assistance in successfully mediating what had become an intractable problem.”

Since the restoration of full attendance at NITC working relationships have been very positive but due to the delay in the full implementation of ESA the amount of progress made has not been as great as had been expected. This has led to the build up of frustrations regarding the effectiveness of the Teachers' Negotiating Machinery.

The full NITC meets every other month with the Interests Group (2 per union) meeting in the intervening months or when there is an urgent matter to be dealt with.

There follows a summary of the work of the NITC and Interests Group during the 2009/2010 year.

1st May 2009

- The Northern Ireland Teachers' Council was formally reconstituted and new Office Bearers put in place.

18th May 2009

- The issue of a common response to the consultation on the Premature Retirement Compensation Scheme was discussed and it was agreed that a draft ballot would be circulated as a basis for possible future joint action.
- An update of the work of the Central Planning Group was given and it was noted that there was tension between rationalisation/closures and the work of the Area Planning Groups.
- It was reported that Management Side seem to be seeking reasons not to implement the Cycle to Work scheme.
- Agenda items were agreed for the forthcoming Teachers' Superannuation Consultative Committee and it was confirmed that the Premature Retirement Compensation Review Group was a sub-group of the JWP.
- A discussion took place on Classroom Observation and it was agreed that a draft joint statement be prepared.
- A presentation was made on conditions of service and salaries.
- It was reported that the forthcoming meeting by Jerry Weist, Superintendent of Montgomery County, Washington, had been postponed but that the Unions would meet with ESAIT and report back.
- Planning for the forthcoming joint principals' conference on Transfer 2010 was delegated to a working group.

15th June 2009

- NASUWT and ATL agreed to pay outstanding affiliation fees and apologised for the oversight.
- Nominations were confirmed to the School Closures working group.
- It was agreed that the NITC position on the review of PRSD was to maintain the status quo.
- It was reported that the NISTR database was in the process of data cleansing. Concerns were also raised regarding the cost of vetting and the unacceptable time delays associated with the process.
- It was agreed that NITC should formally request that a survey of teachers be undertaken by the DE to assess the level of violence against teachers in schools.
- It was noted that there was likely to be around 240 ~ 250 redundancies but that most compulsory redundancies had been resolved through transfer. It was agreed that NITC should meet with the employers to stress that any unused money from the £6m budget set aside by DE to deal with redundancy should be used in schools that are closing.
- Discussion took place on the possibility of taking industrial action to halt the proposed changes to the premature retirement arrangements.
- A pre-meeting was arranged to co-ordinate input to the Education Committee on Transfer 2010.
- There was a lengthy discussion on the Washington visit and it was agreed that NITC should enter into joint discussions with DE and ESA to explore the potential for joint working and strategic policy and budgetary influence.
- It was noted that the Joint Industrial Relations Training was to be renamed and fully funded by RTU and a draft prospectus was circulated.

18th August 2009 (Interests Group)

- A schedule of work for the JWP was agreed, along with dates for future JWP meetings.
- A revised Joint Statement on the reconstitution of NITC was agreed for distribution.
- It was felt that the employers' Parental Complaints document was too long and amendments were required. It was decided that it should be re-written by NITC.
- Discussion took place on the Bullying & Harassment Procedure with concerns being raised about time-scales. It was agreed that the potential for a pool of independent investigators should be explored.
- The Guidelines on Anaphylaxis were considered and it was agreed that NITC

should be seeking to include a strong statement that teachers are not required to administer drugs/medicine to pupils and that the role of the SENCO and Principals referred to within the document should be clarified.

- The agenda items for the forthcoming meeting with ESA were decided and it was agreed that discussion should take place with the unions representing non-teaching staff about future relations with ESA.

4th September 2009 (Interests Group)

- A robust discussion took place regarding the issues of trust between the teacher unions and trust between NITC and DE/ESA. It was agreed that it was essential to build trust around non-contentious issues and that it might be useful to focus on professional development as a possible topic for debate at the forthcoming DE/ESA/NITC workshop.
- The need to bring other unions into the negotiating process and the need for an agreed strategy document were both stressed.
- A draft Classroom Observation statement was discussed but no agreement reached.
- A table showing the outstanding elements of the Curran proposals was noted.

17th September 2009 (Interests Group)

- The date of a forthcoming meeting with Jerry Weist, Superintendent of Education in Montgomery County, was noted and it was agreed that each union could send up to three representatives.
- It was noted that the draft Teacher Health & Wellbeing strategy would be tabled at the next JWP meeting.
- There was an update on the situation pertaining to classroom assistants and job evaluation.
- A paper on possible future working relationships with DE/ESA was agreed, to go forward to the next meeting of NITC for discussion.
- Amendments were made to the prioritisation paper on Curran and it was agreed that the amended paper would be issued to NITC.

21st September 2009

- It was noted that the majority of redundancies had been resolved but that NITC should seek early involvement in the process for the year ahead.

- There was extensive discussion on the draft Classroom Observation document and written comments were requested.
- It was agreed to defer consideration of the Curran paper until the next NITC.
- After some discussion on the Scottish Winding Down Scheme it was agreed that NITC should write to the Department of Education and urge them to move forward with this matter.
- It was agreed that a facilitated workshop using the DE and NITC papers on possible future working arrangements should take place.
- A discussion took place about the system of peer review in Montgomery County in light of the possible revision of the Unsatisfactory Teacher Procedure.
- It was noted that several schools had volunteered to take part in the 4-day Industrial Relations Training pilot course to be run jointly between NITC and RTU.
- A joint letter to school principals on Transfer 2010 was agreed and a joint press release was to be agreed by the Interests.
- It was agreed that a paper on Early Professional Development be drawn up.
- It was noted that the SEN Review would result in workload issues and discussion of this was deferred to the next meeting.
- Concerns were raised over the ability of NISTR to “strike off” teachers. It was agreed that NISTR should not have the authority to suspend and that their protocol should be examined at the next NITC meeting. It was also agreed that NITC should write to DE to ensure that the Precautionary Suspensions working group is reconvened.

19th October 2009 (Interests Group)

- A presentation was given by Katrina Godfrey, DE, on the proposed changes to the Circular on Reporting and Assessment. She confirmed that there was no intention to use INCAs as an assessment tool for transfer.
- Further discussion took place on the Classroom Observation paper and it was noted that NAHT had unilaterally issued its own guidance on this topic.
- It was noted that the Minister for Education had agreed to extend the period for consultation on the SEN Review by one month.
- The ICTU Rally as part of its Public Service Cuts Campaign was discussed but it was felt that teachers would have difficulty in attending during the school day.
- A letter to principals on Transfer 2010 and coaching was agreed for issue with all five logos and signatures.

16th November 2009

- It was noted that the TNC is likely to be convened in early 2010 to ratify a number of documents. The need for training to go alongside the documents was raised.
- It was agreed that a claim for an Implementation Policy for the Teacher Health & Wellbeing strategy be tabled at the next JWP.
- A sub-group was set up on Classroom Observation.
- It was noted that the Unsatisfactory Teacher Procedure had been agreed for review. It was felt that this might be a way of exploring the possible implementation of the Montgomery County model.
- There was a proposal to change the name of the Parental Complaints document to "Parental Concerns", with subsequent amendments throughout.
- It was agreed that the latest version of the Bullying and Harassment Procedure should be issued to schools.
- A working group on the Curran Paper was set up.
- It was noted that the EQIA on changes to the premature was being translated into Irish but that the DE was still aiming for legislation to be in place by 1st April 2010. NITC agreed to campaign that no changes should be made during the current academic year.
- There was discussion regarding Transfer 2010 and the fact that there were reports of teachers being asked to invigilate entrance tests.
- It was decided to seek a meeting with the Equality Commission about the SEN Review.
- Concerns were expressed that GTC was not being given due regard in its advisory role on Professional Development of teachers. It was agreed that a meeting should be sought with GTC and CASS and that the matter be raised at the next meeting with the ETI.
- It was reported that teachers were increasingly finding discrepancy between the P4 INCAs scores and other forms of teacher assessment. It was agreed that a meeting be sought with Katrina Godfrey.
- It was agreed that the Secretary should write to the Minister seeking assurances about the future of Standing Conferences of which NITC was generally supportive.
- Agenda items for the forthcoming meeting with the ETI were agreed.

7th December 2009

- It was agreed that the NITC position was that the existing negotiating machinery

should remain in place with ESA representatives replacing the existing employers' representatives, but that improvements to the efficiency of the current arrangements in terms of actually progressing issues should be addressed.

- It was reported that DE were refusing to allow the School Closures document to be agreed until new regulations on Reorganisation Allowances are agreed.
- It was noted that the Teacher Abuse survey would be finalised at the next JWP meeting.
- There was a full and frank discussion of the fact that the discipline of NITC had broken down at a recent meeting with the ETI. The importance of presenting a common view at such meetings was stressed.
- The position of the support staff unions viz-a-viz Montgomery County was discussed and it was decided that a forthcoming meeting with DE be postponed until there was clarity of purpose.
- Support was confirmed for the retention of Standing Conferences.
- It was agreed that Mary McKee, DE, be invited to the February NITC Interests meeting to give a presentation on the Lisanelly development in Omagh.

18th January 2010

- There was an update from the sub-group on Classroom Observation.
- It was noted that no dates had as yet been set for a number of JWP working groups, including the review of the Unsatisfactory Teacher Procedure and the Winding Down Scheme.
- A report of the sub-group tasked with drafting agreed amendments to the Redundancy Procedure was given.
- It was noted that the sub group on Curran had met and prioritised a number of issues, including PPA, Nursery Principals administration time, Cover for Absence and the employment of Newly Qualified Teachers.
- Agreement was reached on the wording of the Teacher Abuse survey.
- An update was given on the various meetings related to the SEN Review.
- It was agreed that a working group be set up to consider the best means of reporting unsatisfactory teaching to a teacher following a school inspection.

15th February 2010 (Interests)

- A presentation was made by Hazel Johns, Strategic Investment Board, on the development of Lisanelly site, Omagh.

- A verbal report of the JWP meeting was given with special reference to progress on the Health Declaration and the Cycle to Work Scheme.
- It was agreed to hold a further meeting of the Classroom Observation subgroup.
- NAHT disputed their agreement to the Teacher Abuse Survey. It was agreed that DE should be informed that they should proceed unilaterally on the understanding that the other four unions would support the Survey and encourage members to participate.
- It was agreed that a firm timetable for decisions on any proposed changes to the Premature Retirement Scheme should be sought at the next JWP meeting and that unions should seek to be included in any deliberations regarding changes to redundancy payments.
- It was noted that the Education Committee had requested a further briefing from NITC on concerns regarding the SEN Review.
- A discussion took place on a recent briefing by DE on the Teacher Education Review and it was agreed that a joint response would be submitted by NITC.
- Following the procrastination of Management Side in relation to agreeing a Teacher Health and Wellbeing Strategy it was agreed that the Health & Safety Executive NI should be contacted.
- The guidance on the splitting of Teaching Allowances was discussed and it was agreed that an approach be made to DE to clarify aspects of the guidance in advance of the next JWP meeting.
- A small working group was tasked with responding on the pre-consultation document on Assessment.
- It was agreed that a meeting should be sought with the new DE Permanent Secretary, Paul Sweeney.
- A report of the first meeting of the INCAs Working Group set up by the Minister was given and unions were requested to input any information they might have.
- A working group on Precautionary Suspensions was formed.

6. TEACHERS' NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE — SALARIES AND CONDITIONS

The UTU was represented on the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council, the teachers' side of the negotiating machinery, by the President, Lexie Scott, the Vice President, Lewis Love, the ex-President, Melanie Houston, the Senior Field Officer, Mike Graves and the General Secretary, Avril Hall-Callaghan.

The General Secretary and Senior Field Officer represented the UTU on the NI Teachers' Negotiating Committee (TNC) and attended the only meeting of TNC held in the 2009/10 year.

The Chairperson of the TNC is Brian Garrett and the Secretary was Fiona Barnes, Department of Education. Fiona is now seconded to the Education and Skills Authority and the UTU would wish to place on record its thanks to Fiona for the excellent work she undertook on behalf of the TNC, the JWP and its working groups, particularly the work on Teacher Abuse.

At the meeting on 8th June 2009, held in UTU Headquarters, the Chairman inquired about the recent workings of the Committee. Avril Hall-Callaghan, the Chairperson of Teachers' Side, informed him that they had been harmonious and had resulted in the successful production of a range of documents for ratification, as follows:

- **Maternity Scheme TNC 2008/1**
- **Teacher Attendance Procedure TNC 2008/2**
- **Grievance Procedure TNC 2008/3**
- **Disciplinary Procedure (Notes of Guidance) TNC 2008/4**
- **Mediation Procedure TNC 2008/6**
- **Statutory Leave Entitlement during Maternity Leave TNC 2009/1**
- **Equal Opportunities Policy TNC 2009/2**
- **Joint Declaration of Protection TNC 2009/3**
- **Job Share Scheme TNC 2009/4**
- **Career Break Scheme TNC 2009/5**
- **Flexible Working Scheme TNC 2009/7**
- **Temporary Variation of Contract TNC 2009/7**
- **PPA Policy Statement TNC 2009/8**

Assent was also sought for the Tackling Violence Against Staff in Schools document approved by the Joint Working Party immediately prior to the TNC meeting and this was given, although further amendments to the document continued to be made in the following months and full agreement on a final document was given in January 2010.

It is pleasing to note that all the recognised teachers' unions were in attendance at this TNC meeting.

7. TEACHERS' NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE — JWP

The General Secretary, Avril Hall-Callaghan, represents the UTU on the Joint Working Party (JWP) of the TNC, a body that negotiates the agreements that are ratified at TNC.

Increasingly the detail of these agreements is being developed through working groups which co-opt expertise from a variety of sources to ensure that the documents comply with current legislation. Following the Conciliation exercise carried out under the auspices of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions all unions were once again fully engaged in the negotiating bodies from May 2009 onwards.

Teachers' Side and Management Side meet separately prior to JWP meetings to ensure unanimity of position on each side before negotiations begin and this assists in progressing the work. The President, Lexie Scott, attended pre-meetings along with the General Secretary.

The Teachers' Side of the JWP during 2009/2010 included:

Avril Hall-Callaghan, UTU, Chair of NITC; Frank Bunting, INTO, Vice Chair of NITC; Seamus Searson, NASUWT, Secretary of NITC; Mark Langhammer, ATL, Minutes Secretary of NITC; David Canning, NAHT (until June 2009); Fern Turner, NAHT, Treasurer of NITC (from October 2009).

The Management Side of JWP included the following:

John Miskelly, GBA, Chair of Management Side; Robin Harper, NEELB; Laverne Montgomery, CCMS (until June 2009); Suzette Bracken, CCMS (October 2009); Rita McCrory, CCMS (from November 2009); Pat Keating, SELB; John Mason, SEELB; Mark Mawhinney, DE; Martin Thompson, DE; Mairead Morgan, ESA (from January, 2010).

The pattern of monthly meetings has now been established and seems to be working well in terms of dealing with the ongoing work. All the unions on the JWP, however, have grave concerns that the progress that could be made has been hampered by the uncertainties over an implementation date for ESA. In order to try

to move things forward it was suggested that a representative of ESA attend meetings and this was implemented from January 2010.

The work of the group was supported by Jenny Fryers, Management Side Secretary; Jill Loughridge, NEELB; Fiona Barnes, DE (until June 2009); Gillian Skimmin, DE (from October 2009). The Union wishes to place on record its sincere thanks to all of the aforementioned for the huge contribution they make in supporting the work of the JWP.

The following is a summary of the work of the JWP during 2009/2010:

6th April 2009

The Management Side Support Officer advised that she was completing a summary report of a recent meeting regarding the Health Declaration. She also stated that she had received a further response from the Chief Executives of the Education and Library Boards confirming that they would not provide funding for substitute cover for teachers to attend an RTU pilot programme of Joint Industrial Relations Training. This was particularly disappointing since Management Side had made the proposal for such training.

The Chair of Teachers' Side reported that the Teachers' Health and Wellbeing group was due to meet soon to discuss the drafting of a strategy

It was reported that the Equal Opportunities policy had been finalised but that an SELB officer had voiced some concerns. After some discussion the paper was approved to go to TNC for ratification. Similarly after considering a list of employing authority comments the Joint Declaration of Protection was approved subject to minor amendment.

A DE representative informed JWP members that the wording of a joint statement on Preparation, Planning and Assessment was almost complete and would be circulated for approval. A discussion took place on outstanding issues with the DE regarding the issuing of instructions to schools about payment of teachers through the Northern Ireland Substitute Teachers' system without consultation through JWP and the fact that DE had still not arranged a meeting of the precautionary suspensions working group.

Statistics on maternity leave were tabled which seemed to show a drop in the number of teachers going onto sick leave after 26 weeks maternity leave. It was agreed that the issue of statutory leave would be considered at the next JWP meeting.

Teachers' Side raised concerns regarding unapproved documentation in mediation exercises carried out by SELB Officers and this was to be tabled at the next JWP meeting.

DE referred to the £6m obtained to assist employers in the management of redundancies. Management Side was hopeful that this would obviate the need for compulsory redundancies. Teachers' Side again called on the employers to create a panel of teachers, similar to the old supply pools, to ensure that teachers who could not be re-deployed in schools could continue to be employed. A further plea was made that details of the Winding Down Scheme in Scotland be considered with a view to implementing the scheme in NI.

Teachers' Side raised concerns about the fact that a teacher could be dismissed on health grounds by the employer without a guarantee that they would qualify for an infirmity pension from DE. It was agreed that it would be useful to bring pensions staff and Occupational Health Service staff together to discuss this further.

DE advised that they were in the process of drawing up guidelines on the payment of honoraria following Teachers' Side having raised concerns about abuse of the system. There was discussion regarding the splitting of Teaching Allowances and it was agreed that the existing guidance might need to be reviewed.

11th May 2009

It was reported that an update was awaited on the progress of the Parental Complaints document and Teachers' Side urged that it be available for the next JWP meeting. It was also reported that work was ongoing on a Reorganisation Allowances circular and that it needed to be considered in tandem with the School Closures document. Teachers' Side expressed concern as this had not been made clear at the outset. It was agreed that a working group should be set up to look at issues relating to school closures.

Teachers' Side pressed for adoption of the Cycle to Work Scheme, which is in line

with government policy. Management Side stated that they had a number of concerns around administration and accountability and they felt that Teachers' Side should provide evidence to support the Scheme. Teachers' Side said that they would raise the matter at a forthcoming meeting with ESAIT.

It was confirmed that subject to the re-opener clause not being invoked in England and Wales the 2.3% pay deal from September 2009 would go ahead.

In connection with the drawing up of an agreed document on Flexible Working Jenny Fryers, Management Side Support Officer, confirmed that the child age limit remains at age 6 in NI despite a change to age 16 planned for England and Wales in October.

There was discussion regarding concerns about the NI Substitute Teachers' Register (NISTR) related to the length of time to process applications. There was also concern that NISTR appeared to have suspended a teacher from the register following a complaint and it was agreed that NISTR should not take on what was essentially the employer's role.

It was agreed that a further letter be sent to DE regarding the reconvening of the Precautionary Suspensions Working Group.

It was reported by Management Side that there appeared to be approximately 270 potential redundancies and that schools had been informed about the enhanced severance arrangements that would be available in August which would be twice the normal redundancy payment. There would be no entitlement to pension and lump sum as in previous years except by application for an actuarially reduced pension only applicable to those over the age of 55.

Teachers' Side was insensed about the lack of prior notice of these arrangements and received an apology for the fact that they had not been sent copies of the letters. It was agreed that a joint meeting of all the employing authorities would be convened to consider the extent of the problems in dealing with redundancy. It was noted that the position regarding the legislation would be clear by the first week in June and that the legislation had been screened out on EQIA.

It was stated that termination of employment on health grounds would be on the agenda of the next Teachers' Superannuation Consultative Committee in May and the DE representative assured members that he would pursue developments in the

Winding Down Scheme with Scottish colleagues. Information was supplied on the number of teachers currently in receipt of Teaching Allowances, as follows:

TA1	3450
TA2	2390
TA3	1101
TA4	451
TA5	195
R&R1	11
R&R2	5
SEN1	168
SEN2	1076
Reorg	127

It was noted that these figures exclude Voluntary Grammar Schools and relate to a total of 14,748 full time and 1821 part time teachers and thus approximately 50% of teachers in controlled and maintained schools are in receipt of a Teaching Allowance. Management Side stated that they were preparing draft guidance on the splitting of Teaching Allowances.

It was noted that the PRSD Scheme was due for review and a small sub-group was set up to take this forward. It was confirmed by DE that its position on classroom observation was that any observation outside PRSD should be undertaken only by the Principal, preferably by agreement and with suitable notice given.

The issue of Honoraria was raised and figures for the 2007/08 year circulated. It was noted that current guidance makes it clear that an Honorarium should not be used for duties that ought to attract a Teaching Allowance.

8th June 2009

Teachers' Side suggested that in future it would be best if all five unions could be represented on working groups and this was accepted.

The cost to student teachers of the current arrangements for vetting in their 1st and 3rd years of study was raised. It was agreed that a meeting should be arranged with the Colleges on this matter.

Teachers' Side's concerns regarding both the issue of the NISTR letter without consultation and the lack of a response from DE in relation to calling a meeting of the Precautionary Suspensions Working Group were once again raised and noted.

Following confirmation that unapproved paperwork had indeed been issued by the SELB in the course of Mediation Teachers' Side stated that they would be advising members to request that in future all Mediation be carried out through the Labour Relations Agency. Management Side agreed that teachers should have that choice and that any case where parties are not given that choice should be reported.

DE stated that there was currently no reason to believe that the proposed changes to legislation to impose reduced pensions on teachers accessing early retirement due to redundancy would not go through. Teachers' Side raised a number of issues, including the fact that some schools had notified unions of redundancies beyond the recognised cut-off date. The appropriate ELB undertook to investigate the reasons for this. It was also agreed that should the £6m set aside for the enhanced severance scheme be under-spent a meeting would be held to consider the options.

Teachers' Side agreed the revision to the guidance on the splitting of Teaching Allowances and also the guidance on Tackling Violence Against Staff in Schools. A lengthy discussion then took place on Threshold and its interaction with the PRSD Scheme, with Teachers' Side querying the necessity for Threshold to remain an "event".

The rationale for the revision of the Bullying & Harassment procedure to state "investigatory panel" rather than "sub-committee of the Board of Governors" was outlined and it was agreed that all references to "staff" be amended to "teachers" since JWP has no remit to negotiate on behalf of non-teaching staff. It was felt that it would be useful to have commonality of procedures where possible but that in the meantime it needed to be clear which scheme would be used when members of both teaching and non-teaching staff were involved.

30th June 2009

The July JWP meeting was brought forward to 30th June due to the holiday period and Julie Stephenson, Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety was invited to attend to give a presentation on the proposals on Vetting and Barring.

It had just been announced in the media that the proposed changes to the premature retirement scheme were not to go ahead, pending a further Equality Impact Assessment consultation and this was confirmed by DE representatives. They stated that it was the Department's intention to progress towards legislation being in place by January 2010. (This timetable has not been adhered to and at time of going to press no legislation has yet been enacted, although the EQIA consultation exercise has now taken place.)

It was agreed that all efforts should be made to ensure no compulsory redundancies, including a further trawl for volunteers, and that salary would be extended to redundant teachers for the month of September to allow a longer period to effect transferred redundancies. It was further agreed that there may be a possibility of a further extension beyond September in exceptional circumstances.

It was noted that NITC was preparing a statement on Classroom Observation. It was also noted that in the absence of any further response from DE on the reconvening of the Precautionary Suspensions Working Group that Teachers' Side would take this matter up directly with the Minister for Education.

A number of Working Groups were tasked with reviewing the following procedures:

- Termination of Employment on the Grounds of Ill Health
- Bullying and Harassment
- Parental Complaints
- Redundancy Procedure & Guidelines
- Winding Down Scheme

Concerns were raised over the recording of information relating to Extended Schools and Teachers' Side stated their concerns regarding the workload implications of the current Reporting and Assessment arrangements.

The proposal to issue a teacher survey to assess the current levels of abuse towards teachers was referred to the existing Teacher Abuse Working Group.

Teachers' Side requested that the Adoption Scheme be revised to allow for similar arrangements to the Paternity Scheme.

It was noted that the Joint Industrial Relations Training was to proceed, with all funding provided by RTU and that dates had been organised and would be

advertised.

It was further noted that approval had been granted for a 2.3% cost of living rise for teachers' salaries from September 2009 in line with the agreed three year package modelled on parity with England and Wales.

It was agreed that due to the number of working groups meeting to progress the review of procedures it would be best to cancel the September JWP meeting to allow them time to meet and report.

12th October 2009

Teachers' Side was informed that at the end of September 2009 there were 211 redundancies in total, 190 of which were voluntary and 21 compulsory. It was confirmed that efforts were still being made to re-deploy 2 teachers.

It was noted that the Working Group on PRSD had met on 1st October and that a report would be ready for the next JWP meeting.

The issue of Vetting and Barring and how this scheme would fit alongside the existing Access NI arrangements was further discussed as was the necessity of vetting students twice.

Teachers' Side expressed their concern that despite having raised the matter of the Precautionary Suspensions Working Group with the Minister in July there had still been no meeting arranged. It was noted that the Group had not met since February 2006.

At the Teachers' Superannuation Consultative Committee meeting in May a request had been made that a review of the two-tier ill-health retirement scheme be undertaken, in line with a similar review in England and Wales. A DE representative reported that a timetable for this review had not been set due to lack of resources in the Department. It was agreed to put this on hold pending the outcome of the review in England and Wales.

It was agreed that the Maternity and Adoption Schemes would be considered by a Working Group. Teachers' Side also requested that there be consultation with the unions before the new circular on Reporting and Assessment is issued to schools.

A schedule of meetings for 2009/10 was agreed and at this point Teachers' Side

expressed its frustration regarding the lack of progress on many of the issues that were ongoing, particularly the Winding Down Scheme. A meeting of the Working Group on Winding Down had been promised for August but had not taken place. DE agreed to circulate a discussion paper on Winding Down, including details of the scheme in Scotland, before the next JWP meeting.

There was discussion on the position pertaining to principals in Nursery Schools who were excluded from benefiting from the funding from the Small Schools Support Factor to access the recommended non-teaching time for administration. DE responded that this would be considered within the context of the Fundamental Review of School Funding.

Teachers' Side flagged up their concerns regarding workload as a result of the SEN Review and requested that DE representatives seek an extension to the closing date for the response on this document.

9th November 2009

It was reported that Jenny Fryers, MSSO, and Frank Bunting, Conditions of Service Spokesperson, had met with the Managing Director of Occupational Health Consultants, Dr Phillip McCrea regarding the Health Declaration form that teachers are asked to complete. While the sample form supplied by Dr McCrea was similar to that of teachers there was no agreement between Teachers' Side and Management Side as to who should have access to the completed form. It was agreed that Jenny and Frank would meet again to consider these issues.

Avril Hall-Callaghan, Chair of the Teachers' Health & Wellbeing Working Group advised that a draft Teacher Health & Wellbeing Strategy was almost complete and was awaiting updated statistics from DE. It was agreed that a copy of the draft strategy would be forwarded to the recently appointed Director of Human Resources, ESA, and tabled at the next JWP.

The School Closures document was referred once again to a Working Group as there was failure to agree on either of the versions presented to date. It was noted that the Minister had given the teacher unions an undertaking that the Precautionary Suspensions Working Group would be reconvened by January 2010.

A meeting was arranged for 13th November to consider the revision of the existing redundancy procedure and guidelines and it was agreed that it would be important

that this matter proceed. It was further agreed that it was vital that the Tackling Violence guidance should issue forthwith.

Updated information on the level of redundancies was supplied with the amended figures being a total of 193, 11 of which were compulsory.

The Bullying & Harassment Procedure was agreed by both sides, subject to a technical amendment. The amended Parental Complaints document produced by Teachers' Side was rejected and referred back to the Working Group.

It was confirmed that DE Officials would meet with the teachers' unions to discuss the SEN Review but that there was no further information at present on the Fundamental Review of School Funding.

The Unsatisfactory Teachers' Procedure, which Teachers' Side had requested be reviewed, was referred to Jenny Fryers with a request that a response be made to the concerns raised in a Teachers' Side letter from 2006.

Teachers' Side reported to Management Side that they had been invited by Robbie McGreevy, ESA HR Director, to give their proposals on interim negotiating machinery. They reported that they had responded to say that the existing negotiating machinery should be retained with ESA representatives taking over from the existing employer representatives.

14th December 2009

The meeting opened with a heated discussion on the lack of progress on establishing a School Closures procedure. Management Side was insistent that this could not be agreed until changes to the Re-Organisation Allowances Circular were made and agreed. Teachers' Side put forward its view that the School Closures document should not be held up pending changes that would have to be subject to consultation in any case. An adjournment was called to allow Management Side to reconsider but on resumption of the meeting Teachers' Side was informed that no progress could be made to which they responded that this was an attack on the integrity of the negotiating committee.

Following a very productive meeting of the Redundancy Working Group it was reported that Tony Carlin, INTO, and John Mason, SEELB, would meet with the Management Side Support Officer to draw up proposed amendments to the

procedure and guidelines.

It was reported that the Tackling Violence in Schools guidelines were still subject to minor amendment but should be ready for sign off at the next JWP meeting. The Teacher Abuse Survey was not finalised nor was there clarity about how the survey would be administered or analysed.

A letter from the Permanent Secretary, Will Haire, regarding the Department's inability to hold a meeting of the Precautionary Suspensions Working Group due to lack of resources was read to the members of JWP and Teachers' Side asked that a formal letter to the Department be re-issued.

It was reported that a Management Side group had met twice to consider queries on the existing Maternity and Adoption schemes and they had felt that no rewording was required but that a list of Frequently Asked Questions might be of use. Teachers' Side stated that they considered the present Maternity Scheme insufficient and asked that its claim for improvements be reconsidered.

It was noted that the Winding Down Scheme Working Group still had not met. A DE representative confirmed that a meeting would be arranged for "early in the New Year".

The Teachers' Side claim for a Cycle to Work Scheme was re-tabled by Management Side who said that they were now prepared to consider the proposal.

Management Side stated its concerns regarding the resource implications of the Teachers' Health & Wellbeing Strategy. Teachers' Side agreed that there were resource implications but stressed that it is vital that this issue is moved forward. Management Side agreed to have a response on the strategy document for either the next JWP meeting or the one after that.

The Bullying and Harassment Procedure was finally agreed for immediate issue to schools, to be ratified at the next TNC meeting.

There was heated debate regarding the Parental Complaints Procedure with Teachers' Side taking exception to the fact that its views were being disregarded. Teachers' Side also complained about the length of time it was taking for agreement to be reached and said that if agreement could not be reached, then teachers would be advised by their unions not to co-operate with any Parental Complaints document

issued by the employing authorities.

It was noted that the Teachers' Side claim for equal treatment for Nursery Principals in respect of dedicated time for administration was being actively discussed internally by DE but that as yet there were no further details of the Fundamental Review of School Funding.

It was agreed that a working group is to be set up in the new year to review the Unsatisfactory Teacher Procedure, with the Teachers' Side letter from 2006 as a starting point. It was also agreed that a representative from both GTC and ETI be invited to join the group.

11th January 2010

Further heated discussion took place about Management Side's refusal to negotiate a School Closures document in advance of re-writing the Re-Organisation Allowance Regulations.

It was reported that the Teacher Abuse Survey was almost finalised but awaited final agreement from Teachers' Side on the wording of two questions. Teachers' Side agreed to confirm the wording following its next meeting of NITC on 18th January. A working group meeting is to be held to finalise survey methodology.

It was also agreed that the amendments to the Redundancy Procedure and Guidance would be discussed at NITC.

An acknowledgement was received from the Minister in response to the letters from both Management and Teachers' Sides regarding the Precautionary Suspensions Working Group.

It was confirmed that from 2011 student teachers are only to be vetted prior to starting their teacher-training course.

A meeting of the working group on Parental Complaints was scheduled for 28th January.

Teachers' Side expressed its dismay and anger when Management Side stated that they wished to provide "enhancements" to the already collectively drawn up Teacher Health & Wellbeing Strategy. It was pointed out that they had been represented at

the working group and any such “enhancements” should have been tabled there. A request from Teachers’ Side that a Health & Safety Committee be set up is to be considered.

It was noted that the Labour Relations Agency had agreed to present an update on

8. TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The Union's General Secretary, Avril Hall-Callaghan, and the President, Lexie Scott, are the two nominated representatives on the Teachers' Superannuation Consultative Committee (TSCC). Avril Hall-Callaghan has for several years acted as Secretary to the Teachers' Side of the TSCC.

The TSCC met in Antrim Board Centre on two occasions during 2009/10 the period under review - 27th May and 5th November. In addition the Premature Retirement Review Group, a working group of the JWP, met on the same day and in the same venue as the TSCC in May since many of those attending were on both committees.

At the 27th May meeting a request was made for a reduction to the minimum phased retirement from 25% to 20 % which would equate to one day. The DE representative stated that while there were no obvious objections to such a change it would require a change to legislation and that this could be best achieved when the Pensions Regulations are being consolidated.

The impact of the letter from DE to the FE employers reminding them of the arrangements for the automatic membership of the pension scheme for part-time staff was discussed but DE did not know if it had resulted in any increase in numbers.

It was reported that as yet there had not been a meeting of the Occupational Health Forum so the issue regarding Ill-Health Retirements linked to Mental Disorders had not yet been raised.

A discussion took place regarding a case of a teacher on long term sickness absence through an industrial relations problem who had been unable to access early retirement through the Efficient Discharge of the Employer's Function. The DE confirmed that making an exception would create a precedent.

It was reported that the Review of the Scottish Winding Down Scheme had been completed and that advice was awaited from the Government Actuary before the outcome was published. It was suggested that proposals for a NI Scheme should

not be delayed and it was agreed that since the outcome should be known in around a month's time the issue should be placed on the agenda of the September JWP meeting.

A request was made for a complete review of the Ill-Health Retirement Scheme, similar to that done for England and Wales. DE responded by saying that it would be difficult to fit it into the current full work schedule but that by the end of the summer DE would propose a date to initiate the Review and that draft Terms of Reference would be provided as soon as possible.

It was confirmed that there were no proposals to privatise the administration of the NI Teachers' Pensions Scheme following a transfer to ESA.

It was noted that the contract for the new pension computer system had been awarded to Capita Hartshead.

At the November meeting of the TSCC it was reported that there had not yet been a meeting of the Occupational Health Forum however, the Occupational Health Service (OHS) had been contacted directly about the issue of mental health retirements. It was reported that OHS had advised that no decision had been taken to treat these cases any differently than in the past. It was noted the number of applicants on these grounds had fallen in the 9-month period from January to September 2009 compared to the same period the previous year but that the number of applications approved had risen by 1%.

It was noted that work on the consolidation of the NI Teachers' Pension Scheme regulations had not yet commenced and the unions requested an early completion of this, in line with England and Wales and certainly by May 2010.

In relation to the Review of the Teachers' Premature Retirement Scheme it was reported that the EQIA was being translated into Irish and would issue for consultation as soon as the Minister agreed it. Following the consultation, which was scheduled to close on 29th January, the Minister would consider the responses and make any changes that were deemed necessary. The Department of Education representatives stated that it was DE's intention that the regulations would be laid before the Executive in March and be made in April. It was stated that if it became clear that the regulations would not be made in April then they would be deferred until September to avoid the uncertainty which had occurred in 2008/09.

The unions' view that any changes to the Scheme should be phased in was noted.

There was some discussion about the inequalities between the treatment of those who had been redeployed and those who had been made redundant and the Department of Education representatives said that this was inevitable. There was also an issue raised regarding the consistency of approach between DE schools and the Further Education Sector.

It was agreed at this meeting that a working group on Winding Down was to be set up, with representatives from NITC and the FE sector nominated, but despite a request that this be actioned as soon as possible at time of going to press this group has still not been convened.

The unions had requested that a review of the Teachers' Ill Health Scheme be undertaken, along the same lines as that which had already taken place in England and Wales. DE's suggested that the NI Scheme may wish to consider adopting the findings of the England and Wales review. This was opposed on the grounds that the number of teachers accessing full benefits was much higher in England and Wales and this was one of the reasons a review was so necessary in NI. It was nevertheless felt that the findings of the England and Wales review were worth considering. It was noted that routine reviews of ill-health cases would no longer be undertaken.

A written report on the replacement computer system for the Teachers' Pension Scheme was distributed for information. Other issues raised were clarification of the funding arrangements post-ESA and the North/South transfer of teachers' pensions.

The UTU made a comprehensive response to the Consultation on the Draft Teachers' (Compensation for Redundancy and Premature Retirement) Regulations, 2009, copies of which are available from UTU Headquarters.

9. TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION WORKING PARTY

Avril Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary, represents the Union on the Teachers' Panel of the Teachers' Panel of the Teachers' Superannuation Working Party. Meetings of the Panel take place in London, with representatives of all the teacher unions UK wide, including those representing teachers/lecturers in FE, HE and the private sector of education, invited to attend. The Teachers' Panel met on two occasions during the past year, in May 2009 and January 2010. As the date of the January meeting clashed with the scheduled JWP meeting Mike Graves, Senior Field Officer, deputised for the General Secretary at the Teachers' Panel meeting.

At the meeting on 15th May 2009 the Minutes of the last meeting in April 2007 were agreed. Concerns were raised about the exclusion of teachers working in prison environments from the pension scheme and the Secretary advised that this should be dealt with as a separate matter. A new Constitution, which had been the subject of consultation, was ratified and there were three other major matters discussed - the Review of the Ill-Health arrangements, the Consolidation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations, 1997, and the re-tendering of the Teachers' Pension Scheme administration.

In relation to the Ill-Health Review it was reported that 82 case studies had been identified and the draft report suggested that of the successful applicants 62% received Total Incapacity Benefit (TIB). Ms Hall-Callaghan reported to the Teachers' Panel that this high level of successful applications for TIB was not replicated in Northern Ireland. Concerns were raised regarding the drop in the number of teachers' with mental health issues who were accessing ill-health retirement. A representative from the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) said that they were just about to embark on a review but were having difficulty due to data protection issues.

At the end of this meeting Barry Fawcett, Assistant General Secretary of the NUT stood down as Secretary to the group and Mike Beard, NAHT, proposed a sincere vote of thanks to Barry for a long and happy retirement. The UTU heartily endorsed this vote of thanks.

Immediately following this meeting a further short meeting took place to elect

Officers under the new Constitution. Barry Lovejoy, UCU, was elected Chair with Mr B Johnson, NASUWT, as Vice Chair. The important position of Secretary was taken by Andrew Morris, NUT, following the long-standing tradition of the NUT holding this office. The UTU wishes Andrew well in his future role acting on behalf of all the teacher unions in negotiating pensions.

On 11th January the Teachers' Panel met to discuss possible future developments in the Scheme. Following this meeting a number of key messages for promotion in the run up to the General Election was drawn up as follows:

- Over 1.5 million people are members of the Teachers' Pension Scheme in England and Wales, either as current members, pensioners, or those with deferred rights in the scheme.
- The Teachers' Pension Scheme has already been through a process of evaluation and reform intended to contain costs. Our 2006 Agreement with the government and local authorities led to a higher employee contribution rate and a higher pension age for new starters.
- All teachers now pay a contribution rate of 6.4% to the Teachers' Pension Scheme – equivalent to the private sector. Teachers aren't asking for something for nothing, but are paying a substantial contribution towards their pension.
- The pension age for new starters in teaching is 65, up from 60.
- The Teachers' Pension Scheme has cost-sharing arrangements in place as a result of the 2006 Agreement, with a 14% cap on the employer's contributions. If costs rise, teachers will pay more.
- The average teacher's pension in payment is less than £10,000. Our members are not "fat cats" and their pensions are a fair reward for their years of service.
- Any attempt to cut teachers' pensions will have a greater impact on women pensioners who have lower average earnings and build up of service during working life.
- There are no "top-up" schemes for high-flyers as is common in the private sector. The head teacher is in the same scheme as the classroom teacher, so measures aimed at high earners will hit the vast majority.

- The real problem in UK pensions is inadequate private sector pension provision. 81% of employers have closed their final salary schemes to new members. The average employer contribution to money purchase schemes is around 6.7% — less than half that to final salary schemes. Cutting the Teachers' Pension Scheme will not improve pensions for private sector workers — it will just entrench a culture of low pensions for everyone.

10. IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS

The Union continues to be represented on the Northern Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (NIC/ICTU) by the General Secretary of the UTU, Avril Hall-Callaghan. Avril has been Vice-Chair of NIC/ICTU for 4 years.

Frank Bunting, INTO, Seamus Searson, NASUWT, and Mark Langhammer, ATL are also members of the Northern Ireland Committee, so teachers can be assured that their interests are more than well-represented.

The General Secretary, as an Officer of NIC/ICTU, has been involved in meetings with senior civil servants and Ministers, including the First and Deputy First Ministers. She is a member of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and regularly attends the Education Trade Union Group, a sub-group of the Northern Committee.

The Union benefits from membership of the ICTU in many tangible ways, including the ability to access training for Officials. The recent mediation carried out by ICTU in relation to the breakdown of relationships within the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council is a further example of the usefulness of membership of this wide-ranging forum.

The recent NIC/ICTU campaign against Public Service Cuts was an excellent example of how public sector workers engaged in a variety of jobs delivering services to the public can unite to highlight problems. Field Officer, Jacquie Reid, addressed the Coleraine Rally in connection with this campaign.

During the year the NIC/ICTU has endorsed UTU nominees to public appointments and members of the UTU represent the Union on the following NIC/ICTU sub-committees:

Women's Committee – Jacquie Reid & Lindsay Miskelly
Education Group – Lexie Scott & Avril Hall-Callaghan
Education and Training – Lexie Scott & Melanie Houston
Black & Ethnic Minority – Lexie Scott & Jacquie Reid
Health & Safety – Melanie Houston & Carney Cumper
Equality – Mike Graves & Jacquie Reid

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender – Lexie Scott & Jacquie Reid

Disability – Melanie Houston & Sally McKee

Global Solidarity – Audrey Stewart & Gillian Garrett

Youth – Diane Nugent

Culture & Arts – Gillian Garrett

Strategic Implementation – Jacquie Reid

The Biennial Conference of ICTU was held in the Brandon Hotel, Tralee in July 2009. UTU had a large party of representatives in attendance, some at their own expense. The following attended as UTU delegates or observers: Melanie Houston; Lexie Scott; Gillian Scott; Lewis Love; Liz Love; Sally McKee; Jennifer Campbell; Jacquie Reid; Avril Hall-Callaghan. Two members of the Association of Educational Psychologists, an affiliate of UTU, also joined the UTU delegation - Carol Adair and Catherine O'Flaherty.

Some of the issues discussed by NIC/ICTU during the 2009/2010 year were:

- Committee Business
- Economic & Employment Matters
- Industrial Reports
- Employment Rights
- Education
- Health
- Trades Councils
- Training, Education and Workplace Learning
- Communications
- Public Appointments
- Consultation Documents

11. REPORTS FROM CEC SUB-COMMITTEES

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES SUB-COMMITTEE

Miss Melanie Houston, Ex-President, Convener

The Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee met on a regular basis throughout the year to oversee the financial affairs of the Union.

Thanks must be extended to the Treasurer Mr G. McVeigh and Mrs A. McHenry, the Financial Executive Officer, whose expertise and hard work on behalf of the union has ensured that the union remains in a healthy financial position. Their knowledge of union finances and dedication has meant that the sub-committee has not only been kept up to date with current actual costs but also possible future expenditure commitments. This has greatly helped the sub-committee to oversee the financial affairs of the Union and to plan for the future.

The University and College Union (U.C.U.) rents office space on the third floor of headquarters. This provides an income to the U.T.U.

There are a number of issues which will require financial commitment in the future including the upgrading of the union computer system.

EDUCATION AND POLICY SUB-COMMITTEE

Mrs Audrey Stewart, Convener

The Education and Policy Sub-Committee is a sub-committee of the Central Executive Committee of the Ulster Teachers' Union and meets to consider items referred from the Central Executive Committee Meetings. The committee has representatives from primary, secondary and special education sectors. Responses are formulated to Consultation Documents and referred back to CEC for amendment and adoption. This has been a very busy year for this committee and the following are some of the issues it has been debating.

- Response Document to Pensions
- Pension Reform document (N.I. was one of the countries mentioned)

- EI – An Action Plan for Education and The Economy
- Pan-European Equality Recommendations
- EI Global Awareness Raising Campaign on Pay-Equity
- RPA Policy Paper 19 – Education Advisory Forum
- RPA Policy Paper 20 – Publicly Owned Schools – Ownership and Representation
- GTC NI Review of Bursary Scheme
- Qualifications Required to Teach In Institutions of F.E.
- DE – Common Formula Funding Consultation
- Faith Schools in N.I. – A discussion paper
- Food in Schools – Consultation Document
- Review of PQH Arrangements
- Every School a Good School – SEN and Inclusion – The Way forward.

The last document listed here has had a huge impact on parents of special needs children, pressure groups, childrens' legal service bodies and all the teaching unions. It has implications for all mainstream schools in terms of accountability, training, funding, resourcing, workload, class size and increased levels of possible litigation.

UTU has made a response, which can be found on our web-site and the convener has attended many meetings with other unions, Department officials and also members of the N.I. Assembly Education Committee, as well as a public meeting in The Great Hall at Stormont. The other teaching unions have made individual responses and a joint response from NITC has been formulated by the five union membership of the Council.

Thanks are due to the Education and Policy Committee members of UTU, who give their time and skills in order to ensure that the voice of the classroom practitioner is heard. The five p.m. starting time for meetings has proved to be a more suitable arrangement for members.

SALARIES AND CONDITIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Ms Avril Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary, Convener.

There were no meetings of the Salaries & Conditions sub-committee during 2009/2010 as discussion on these issues took place either at the INTO/UTU Board, NITC or at pre-meetings of the JWP.

ORGANISATION and MEMBERSHIP SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr Stephen Cumper, Convener.

The 2009 meetings of the Organisation and Membership Committee were postponed due to the impending educational reorganisation with the planned establishment of the Education and Skills Authority, ESA, in January 2010. However due to the continuing uncertainty about the commencement date of ESA, there have been to date no meetings of Organisation and Membership this year.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Mrs Audrey Stewart, Convener

The International Relations Committee deals with items referred by The Central Executive Committee.

As UTU is a member of Education International, many informative booklets come our way – such as :

- Global Solidarity News and Colombian Leaflet.
- Information on learning Mobility of Young People
- OECD 2009 Report
- Campaign on G8
- Triennial Report to ILO-UNESCO
- Pension Reforms in Europe
- ETUCE Statement and working document on Education and training
- ETUCE Statement on the professional development of teachers.

Copies of these documents are available from Headquarters for anyone wishing to read them.

Sometimes the news we receive from Education International is about teachers being persecuted and arrested in other countries. For example: the President of The Fijian Teachers' Association was dismissed from his employment as principal of a secondary school because he was exercising his legitimate trade union leader rights, as recognised by the Fijian Constitution. Education International then requests messages of support to be sent by member unions.

20-26th April 2009 was designated as the “Global Action Week on Education for All” The focus was on literacy being the key to poverty reduction. Education International

provided us with the horrifying statistics revealing that there are still millions of people round the world, who cannot read or write: 75 million children are not in school and 776 million adults are illiterate, of whom two-thirds are female. Without adequate literacy skills it is very difficult for people to lift themselves and their families out of poverty.

The UTU supported this special action week by holding a competition for schools in support of the suggested slogan “Open Books, Open Doors.” A range of Art and Creative Writing activities were devised by the committee

There was a great response to the competition and the quality of entries was extremely high. Prizes included DVD players, Art Materials, books and games and these were delivered to the following schools Beechlawn and Lisanelly Special Schools, Greenwood Assessment Centre, Armstrong Special Unit and Primary School, Grove, Armstrong and Millington Nurseries, Stranmillis, Kells & Connor Primaries, Clounagh Junior High and Banbridge High. Very many thanks to all our competitors and their teachers.

Much of the preparation for the meetings of this committee involves an extensive amount of reading and I would like to thank all the members of committee, who give of their time to prepare for and to attend meetings at headquarters.

CONFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Mrs Gillian Scott, Convener.

The Conference Sub-Committee met on six occasions during the past year. The Conference 2010 programme, theme, backdrop, graphics and design have all been planned and brought to the Executive Committee for ratification.

The same format as last year's conference has been agreed with the rerun of the table quiz which proved very popular last year.

A booklet for sponsors and exhibitors was distributed in the Autumn Term and thanks to the terrific efforts of Mrs Karen Taylor we have seen a small improvement in terms of the commercial interest in Conference. As a Union we gratefully acknowledge the support of our sponsors and exhibitors which we very much appreciate, particularly in these difficult times. We would encourage all our delegates and visitors to take time to look at the exhibition stands and to consider the very many excellent products which are on display.

As Convenor I wish to extend my thanks to all the staff at Union headquarters for their assistance with the preparations for Conference and would pay particular tribute to the expertise and dedication of our Executive Officer, Mrs Karen Taylor. Finally I would like to add my thanks to all those delegates who have given up their time to come along and I would also like to welcome all our very special guests. On behalf of myself, the other members of the Conference Committee and the Executive I hope that you have a very enjoyable time with us at this our 91st Annual Conference.

PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr Lexie Scott, President, Convenor.

One of the significant benefits of our recently refurbished premises is the lack of any major works being required. This has been a quiet year for the property committee. As we go to press we are about to award a new contract for grounds maintenance.

During the year it was agreed to facilitate a request from UCU, who had been renting rooms on the top floor of the building, for a further room. This necessitated a reorganisation of the offices with the President moving into the middle floor and a room converted for the use of one of the field officers.

The property continues to be well used and is a very significant asset to the Union.

APPOINTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr Lexie Scott, President, Convener.

It was reported to Conference last year that one of our Field Officers had left and was being replaced on a temporary basis. The Appointments Committee carried out the due appointment process and I am pleased to report that we have appointed Mrs Audrey Stewart to the position of Field Officer.

Audrey brings her very considerable experience of Union affairs and a wealth of school experience to the post and has settled into her new role well.

There have been no further changes to personnel.

RULES & CONSTITUTION

Ms Avril Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary, Convener

The UTU Rules & Constitution at Conference was last updated in September 2008 and remains on the UTU website. Copies of the Rules and Constitution are available as hard copy on request from Headquarters.

The Rules and Constitution sub-committee met once, on 1st October 2009. Clarification on the interpretation of the Rules & Constitution in relation to membership of the Central Executive Committee had been sought from the Union's solicitors following a query from the Western Area Association. The solicitor's advice was considered and it was agreed that this resolved the issue of eligibility.

A discussion took place on the need to accommodate the new Education and Skills Authority in a revision of the Rules & Constitution and it was noted that any proposed changes must be notified to Branches well in advance of Conference. The further delay in the implementation date for ESA, which should have come into being on 1st January, means that changes are not required imminently. The President, Lexie Scott, initiated a discussion of future Union structures in February 2010.

ICTU/BIGTU SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr Lexie Scott, President, Convener

The business of this committee has been handled directly by CEC. During the year the following business was reported on.

The Union continues to play a role in both ICTU and BIGTU. A full delegation of representatives attended the Biennial Conference of ICTU which was held in Tralee in July. The resolution proposed by the President on the issue of WIFI in schools was well received and passed unanimously.

The President and General Secretary attended the half-yearly meeting of BIGTU, which was held in Stoke Rochford. The main business dealt with was the response of the British and Irish Unions to the proposals to streamline the working of EI Europe and ETUCE. At a domestic level it was noted that the impact of the financial crisis was very significant and that colleagues in Ireland were being particularly badly affected.

POLITICAL AND EQUALITY SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr Mike Graves, Convener

The Committee considered the following documents during 2009:

- Human Rights Consortium — Why We Need a Bill of Rights
- UU — Draft Gender Action Plan
- Equality Commission Challenge Paper — New Migration, Equality and Integration
- Issues and Challenges from NI
- EI — e-mail from Thomas Hammarberg, Commissioner for Human Rights
- Equality Commission — Guidance on Sexual Orientation Law
- DE — Transfer 2010
- EI — Pan-European Equality Committee Recommendations
- NIC/ICTU — ETUC position, Pregnant Workers Directive
- Equality Commission – Sexual Orientation Regulations
- ESA — Equality Impact Assessment
- DEL — IT Claims and the Public Interest Disclosure Order
- DEL — Extension of Right to Request Flexible Working
- EI — Status of Women Survey
- DEL — Consultation on Additional Paternity Leave and Pay
- Employers for Childcare — Plans to axe tax relief
- DE — Equality Impact Assessment on Premature Retirement Scheme

HEALTH AND SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

Mrs Carney Cumper, Convener

The committee was given a number of different reports and consultation documents to consider this year.

We were only called upon to meet once this year. This was to discuss two publications in particular — Proposals for Health and Safety (fees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 and The proposals for the Biocidal Products Regulations.

Once again many thanks go to all members of the committee who have supported this very important sub-committee throughout the year.

UTU NEWS

Ms Gillian Garrett, Editor

There were two editions of UTU news this year. One in Spring term and another in Autumn. Thanks to all our members who regularly contribute and those who sent in

feature stories this year. Thanks go to Ronnie Haughey who works right up to our deadline putting the layout together. Finally, a big thank you to Headquarters staff, for their articles and work in its distribution.

REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL BODIES

UTU/INTO JOINT BOARD

Mr Lexie Scott, President

UTU is represented on the Joint Board by the President, Vice-President, Ex-President, General Secretary and Senior Field Officer.

The initial business this year was the re-establishment of regular meetings of the Board. These had lapsed due pressures of work in other areas. There have been regular and well attended meetings since the beginning of the school year and progress has been made on a number of issues including those reported below.

The Board was joined by the newly elected General Secretary of INTO, Sheila Nunan who has been very supportive of the work of the Board.

A joint Seminar for NQTs was organised in August.

The Joint Board has overseen the organisation of joint recruitment activities in the training colleges and universities.

A joint Youth Conference was held in Enniskillen and was well attended and enjoyed by all present.

The Board had agreed a number of key target areas including a campaign on Class Size, which is about to be launched as we go to press.

For the first time the Board will have a separate budget, funded by both CEC and Northern Committee, to allow Board business to be progressed.

A joint Leadership Conference took place in January.

WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

The WEA had their Annual General Meeting Thursday 26th November at the Grosvenor House Conference Centre, 5 Glengall Street, Belfast with the usual AGM business. After the Annual report they presented the WEA Strategic Plan 2010-2013. With a history of almost 100 years of delivering adult community education the WEA offers a unique learning experience in tune with the needs of our community. Every year dozens of community groups, voluntary organisations, unions and employers choose the WEA for its high quality and personalised provision. From ECDL to basic maths, from conflict management to creative crafts, from sign language to business enterprise they have something for everyone. Like all other areas of Education WEA is going to face problems with funding over the coming months/years. UTU will continue to support them in their endeavour to deliver services to the community.

ICTU EQUALITY REPORT

The ICTU (Irish Congress of Trade Unions) is a body which works on behalf of affiliated unions in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Pauline Buchanan is the ICTU Equality Officer for Northern Ireland and David Joyce holds this position in the Republic of Ireland. As each jurisdiction has its own equality body – the Equality Commission in Northern Ireland and the Equality Authority in the Republic of Ireland – and as each jurisdiction works under different circumstances with regard to legislation, funding and government, equality issues which are common to both require different handling.

Due to these factors, the committees dealing with different aspects of equality – Women's Committee, LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender), BME (Black and Minority Ethnic), Global Solidarity and Disability – function by addressing common issues both through individual sub-committees in their own jurisdictions and through joint cross-border seminars and conferences.

The Strategic Implementation Committee is the overarching ICTU committee which oversees all of the equality work being carried out. It provides a forum for updating members on legislative and structural change, and the impact of this on members; it also allows for the exchange of information and ideas between unions, committees and jurisdictions. It carries out research, lobbies to improve conditions and employs invited speakers to inform and explore issues.

The Strategic Implementation Committee meets in alternate months in Dublin and UTU are represented there. One central focus this year has been the severe levels of cuts in funding due to the present economic crisis; these have been particularly felt in the Republic where cuts as high as 40% led to resignations from the Equality Authority in protest. One contrasting issue was a presentation relating to the trafficking of women, evidence of which has been found in all but 4 counties throughout the island.

The following reports reflect the issues which are fed into the Strategic Implementation Committee from the various areas of equality. As UTU is a Northern Ireland-based union, much of this information will also be based on the equality work in which we are involved here.

WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

The NIC/ICTU Women's Committee meets on the second Wednesday of each month, with the Joint North/South Seminar being held during the first week of March to coincide with International Women's Day. UTU is currently represented on the committee by the Field Officers, Jacquie Reid and Audrey Stewart.

The 2009 Seminar was held on the 6th and 7th March in the Wellington Park Hotel in Belfast. The theme of the seminar was 'Gender Equality in a Recession' and featured a range of speakers and workshops based around the effects of the present economic crisis on women in the workplace both nationally and internationally. The Seminar opened with a range of arts activities which highlighted prejudice and celebrated womanhood and the solidarity of women. As part of this, a Trade Union Drama Group which was part of the Belfast Voices Project performed two pieces of drama to stimulate thought about types of prejudice in our society. The General Secretary and both Field Officers took part in the performance.

The Women's Committee monitors the work of the other equality committees and brings the perspective and particular problems faced by women to bear on this work, lending support where needed. It also keeps updated with changes in legislation which may have an impact on women, for example in the area of flexible working. This is in addition to the considerable body of work carried out on behalf of issues particular to women in the workplace and indeed in society. One major issue under consideration this year has been that of domestic abuse against women. The work has been wide-ranging and has included issuing guidance

to those who are supporting women in the workplace who are victims, developing a model policy for employers and examining the effects of domestic abuse related absences on workplace attendance procedures. The committee held a residential meeting in May where the guest speaker was Irene Wilson, an End Domestic Violence Campaigner and former victim. An 'End Violence Against Women' leaflet has been funded by Trademark and Women's Aid held a training course for union reps to help them support others.

It is interesting and somewhat worrying that the youth in the trade union movement have also focused on this issue this year – both the ICTU Youth Committee and the National Union of Students have held their own campaigns and events, information about which have shared with the Women's Committee to ascertain how we can support each other as the work continues in the future.

Another key issue this year has been the participation and strengthening of women within the trade union movement. The Women's Committee held a two-day Women in Leadership course in Monaghan in November. This was facilitated by Bronagh Hinds and dealt with a range of issues from encouraging women to participate to examining ourselves, our strengths and weaknesses, and building on what we have and are to move forward. This is to be followed up by a training course to begin at the end of February. To celebrate the role of women in the movement, and the fact that we have until recently had a female President of ICTU, Patricia McKeown, the Women's Committee were hosted in Dublin by Mary McAleese at the beginning of November.

LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) COMMITTEE

The NIC/ICTU LGBT Committee had not been meeting in recent times, with key members communicating electronically to keep informed on issues. The decision was taken to reactivate the work and a very well-attended meeting took place at the beginning of September. Perhaps due to the Pride Week activities, one of the main topics of the meeting was the problem of homophobic bullying, its effects on our children and young people and ways in which this may be tackled. Billy McCreight, from the Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre, attended the meeting to present the Consensus Project, through which funding and support may be accessed to put projects in place which will deliver benefits for minority groups or the disadvantaged and build sustainable communities. At this point, the Committee is considering the information which emerged to establish a programme of work. A further meeting is scheduled for the beginning of March to take this forward.

EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

The main focus of this Committee at present is the Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. Negotiations have been ongoing here for over ten years, since the Belfast Agreement in 1998, and there is a consultation in progress at the moment on the recommendations of the Human Rights Committee which is due to conclude at the end of February.

The Committee have organised a seminar to be held on the 1st February for all affiliate unions. The seminar will begin with a range of speakers from public bodies and the community to highlight for members the importance of the Bill of Rights and its potential impact on society. There will then be a series of workshops dealing with a variety of issues including guidance on how and why individual unions should be making their responses and future impact and implementation. Affiliate unions, along with all other interested bodies and individuals in Northern Ireland, will submit responses to the proposals by the end of February. The aftermath of the consultation will, then, feed into the ongoing work of the committee.

ICTU DISABILITY COMMITTEE

The Disability Committee meet regularly throughout the year with the focus being on improving the knowledge of the various union representatives on Disability Legislation and promoting the issues of our members with a wide range of disabilities, to other organisations.

We have had presentations from the Human Rights Commission, the Equality Commission, Trademark, Department of Social Development and Disability Action.

Several of our members, including Melanie Houston, have become Disability Champions.

The ICTU Joint Disability Seminar was held in Belfast on the 1st and 2nd October. Following opening remarks by John Corey, Chair of NIC/ICTU, the Trade Union Drama Group performed a piece which highlighted the experiences of people with a range of disabilities trying to access day-to-day life. The main focus was on perceptions related to mental health and disability. Both UTU Field Officers participated in the piece.

Speakers and discussion covered a wide range of issues around disability. There was input on strategies from the Equality Authority and Equality Commission, and Brian McKee, a barrister, updated the seminar on recent developments in legislation. The Human Rights Consortium reflected on the Bill of Rights and speakers from the Creative Exchange Arts Project and FAS looked at opportunities for those with disabilities to participate.

The main event, however, was the graduation ceremony of the Disability Champions, union members who have undertaken training to highlight and address difficulties encountered, or potentially encountered, by those with disabilities in the workplace. These are the people who will work to improve working conditions for individuals in meaningful ways and they were recognised through the presentation of certificates and congratulations from Patricia McKeown, Ex-President of ICTU.

Further information on the work of the committee, or anyone interested in becoming involved, please contact UTU HQ.

NIC/ICTU GLOBAL SOLIDARITY

Audrey Stewart, Field Officer, attended the Global Solidarity Conference in Waterford at the end of August 2009. The speakers at the conference highlighted how many of the current issues impact on humanity, such as, the inaccessibility of education for many children in the world, employment conditions and working hours, the effect of factory effluent on the health of many people in third world countries, abject poverty and the world wide effect of the recession. The importance of raising awareness to these issues is very important for all unions along with the necessity of working with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to lobby governments to act to resolve these problems.

12. LAW AND TENURE

The following is a list of the casework the Officials selected for report to the Central Executive Committee at each of its meetings. The Officials are closely advised by the Union Solicitors, Shean, Dickson, Merrick.

UTU Officials also take advice from officials at the various agencies, including the Labour Relations Agency and the Equality Commission, as and when required. The Union Solicitors engage the services of barristers on behalf of members, after consultation with the General Secretary. Members of the Central Executive Committee hear the facts of the cases, but the identity of members concerned are not disclosed. CEC advises the Officials, as may be required.

Legal casework is the most important and demanding aspect of the Union's work on behalf of its members. Members who suddenly face police, social services or other investigations following allegations are very appreciative when a practised and able team take up the case on their behalf.

The General Secretary, Ms Avril Hall-Callaghan, who holds a post-graduate Diploma in Law, takes the main responsibility for day-to-day management of legal casework, with help from the Senior Field Officer, Mike Graves and Field Officers, Jacquie Reid and Audrey Stewart. The Union's involvement in legal casework and hearings has increased in recent years.

MARCH 2009

UNSATISFACTORY TEACHER PROCEDURE

The Senior Field Officer said that he had accompanied and supported a member at a review meeting called as part of the informal stage of the Unsatisfactory Teacher Procedure.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT PROCEDURE

The Senior Field Officer reported that he had been advising a member in her response to a case of Bullying and Harassment being brought against her by a teacher in the school. An investigatory meeting was held under the 'Promoting a Dignified Workplace' procedure and she was supported at this meeting by the Senior Field Officer.

COMPLAINT BY PUPIL

The Senior Field Officer stated that he has been advising on the response to a complaint made by a pupil regarding a member's delivery of the curriculum. She was subsequently called to a meeting with the Principal, Vice-Principal and Head of Department with the Senior Field Officer in attendance. An action plan has been drawn up regarding the pupil and the minutes of the meeting have now been agreed by all parties present.

PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSION

The Senior Field Officer reported that a member who has recently joined UTU has been in contact regarding outstanding issues after his return to work from a period of extended sick leave. The Union was obliged to make it clear that it could not retrospectively represent him regarding the historical issues outstanding but the Temporary Field Officer agreed to attend a follow-up attendance meeting as an observer.

The Senior Field Officer was subsequently contacted by the member informing the Union of his precautionary suspension under the Disciplinary Procedure. The Senior Field Officer has met and provided the member with appropriate advice.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

It was reported that a member made application for Flexible Working which was declined due to 'the vulnerability of the class concerned that could be enhanced by a lack of teacher continuity'. Following this the member lodged an appeal and was advised and accompanied by the Senior Field Officer.

POSSIBLE GRIEVANCE

The General Secretary reported that she had consulted the Union's solicitor following a query from a Principal over the provision of a telephone reference.

BULLY AND HARASSMENT PROCEDURE

The General Secretary stated that she had accompanied a principal to a full one-day hearing to answer charges of Bullying and Harassment. She reported that the Hearing was conducted by an independent person appointed by the employing authority, supported by an Board Officer. The report of the hearing has been issued and the principal now awaits the full report of the investigator.

UNSATISFACTORY TEACHER PROCEDURE

The General Secretary said that she was supporting a teacher who had been found

unsatisfactory following a school inspection. She reported that she had contacted the ETI and the teacher was considering initiating the Complaints Procedure. She had also spoken to the Principal and the CASS service.

MAY 2009

PREMATURE RETIREMENT

It was reported that the General Secretary and Field Officer have been assisting a member in a secondary school faced with school closure to explore her legal position regarding loss of pension. The Union's solicitors composed a letter of challenge to the change in the PRC School that has been sent by the member to the employing authority and a response is awaited.

UNSATISFACTORY TEACHER PROCEDURE

It was reported that the General Secretary has been advising a member who has been identified as unsatisfactory as a result of a school inspection. The member also has issues regarding the manner in which the reporting inspector dealt with this matter and is currently considering whether he will register a complaint with ETI.

AGE DISCRIMINATION CLAIM

It was reported that the long-running grievance/claim of age discrimination has come to a conclusion with all claims against the principal having been discredited. The General Secretary noted the pressure the principal had been placed under during the course of this case, which illustrates the effect that such spurious allegations can cause.

JUNE 2009

UNFAIR SELECTION FOR REDUNDANCY

The Senior Field Officer reported that in setting out the criteria for redundancy the Board of Governors indicated that protection would be given to those who are qualified to teach RC RE is, according to counsel potentially unlawful because it may be discriminatory. The member selected for redundancy has been advised by the Union's solicitors to raise a statutory grievance with the school on the grounds that she has suffered religious discrimination contrary to the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (NI) 1998. If this grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved within 28 days legal proceedings will be instigated before the Fair Employment Tribunal.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

The Senior Field Officer accompanied a member to a preliminary investigation held under the Disciplinary Procedure. The member is currently on a precautionary suspension.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

The Senior Field Officer accompanied a member to a Disciplinary Hearing held under the formal stage of the Disciplinary Procedure. During the disciplinary process several irregularities occurred which has lead the member into raising a formal grievance using LRA guidelines.

ALLEGED ASSAULT

The Field Officer accompanied a principal and the Union solicitor to an interview with the PSNI regarding an alleged assault on a child. This represents the culmination of the investigation and a decision regarding how the case will proceed is expected shortly.

PARENTAL ALLEGATIONS

The Field Officer accompanied a member to a meeting with the Union solicitor regarding the content of a letter sent by a parent to the teacher questioning her performance in the classroom. A letter has been sent by the Union solicitor challenging this and a response is awaited.

STRESS AT WORK

The Field Officer represented a member at a meeting with the principal of a BELB school. The meeting was informal and concerned issues with staff members which have led to the member taking time off work with stress-related illness.

SEPTEMBER 2009

PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSION

The General Secretary stated that a member had been notified of a child protection issue at the end of July but had not been told the substance of the allegation. She said that at the end of August the member had returned to school for the "Baker Days" but that on the first day the pupils returned she was called to Principal's office and told she was suspended. The General Secretary outlined the steps taken to support the teacher, including the threat to issue an injunction in order to establish what the allegation against the member is.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

The General Secretary reminded CEC members of the history of this long-running case and the fact that an investigatory panel had been established over one year ago. She said that the investigators had contacted the principal involved in late August and asked her to attend a further meeting with them in early September.

The General Secretary accompanied the member to what proved to be an unproductive meeting and on the advice of the Union's solicitors has written to the employing authority stating her concerns regarding the process. The Union's solicitors entered into correspondence with the employing authority in an attempt to reinstate the member's salary since she is now going into her fourth year with no salary pending the resolution to her claim.

PARENTAL ALLEGATIONS

The Field Officer reported on a member in a primary school who had come under considerable harassment from two families. The parents are accusing the principal of defamation of character. The parents solicitor and the UTU solicitor attempted to facilitate a mediation meeting between both parties but this was turned down by the parents. The member is off school with stress, directly related to this case and has been instructed by the solicitor that while he is unwell, he cannot attend any meetings with the NEELB regarding this case.

UNFAIR SELECTION FOR REDUNDANCY

The Field Officer reported that after receiving notification of a determination to terminate the employment of a member an application was made to the Independent Appeals Panel of the LRA. On advice from Counsel, the member raised a statutory grievance on the grounds that she suffered direct and indirect religious discrimination contrary to the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (NI) 1998. By the last week in June the school withdrew the redundancy determination and offered her employment.

The Grievance was heard by the Staffing Committee in early June and was turned down. The member accepted the offer of an alternative position in a letter worded by Counsel. The offer was accepted reluctantly and only to avoid unemployment. A Fair Employment Statutory Questionnaire was compiled and a response received in early August. Further enquiries are being conducted by UTU in advance of a meeting with Counsel in October.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

It was reported that the Senior Field Officer has been supporting a member through the stages of a disciplinary procedure. A determination was made by the sub-committee that the member is guilty of misconduct and should be the subject of a verbal warning.

During the course of the disciplinary procedure evidence emerged of certain irregularities involving members of the investigatory Panel at the preliminary stage. On advice from UTU and the LRA code of conduct, a formal grievance was raised asking for a re-run of the process and that an officer from the employing authority be in attendance. The school did not accept the grievance application however in the light of the disciplinary outcome the grievance was not taken to a further stage.

OCTOBER 2009**ALLEGED ASSAULT**

The Field Officer reported that the General Secretary had continued to give support to a teacher suspended from school due to allegations made by two classroom assistants. The teacher has been interviewed by the police in the company of the Union's solicitor and it seemed likely that no action would be taken. A representative from Social Services has interviewed the teacher's fourteen year-old daughter.

DISCIPLINARY HEARING

The Field Officer reported that the General Secretary had accompanied a member to a Disciplinary Hearing where the member was questioned about an incident where she had signed a colleague in to an in-service course although she knew the colleague would not attend due to illness. The teacher later corrected what she had done but nevertheless it was reported by the course organisers to internal audit who were insisting that the Board of Governors follow the Disciplinary Procedure. The outcome of the Hearing is not yet known.

FAIR EMPLOYMENT CLAIM

The Field Officer reported on the Senior Field Officer's case stating that the Equality Commission has agreed to fund this case. They will continue to utilise the services of the Union's barrister and the Union solicitor has prepared the documents for hand over.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

The Field Officer further reported that the Senior Field Officer had accompanied and represented a member to an interview held under the Disciplinary Procedure. The precautionary suspension imposed has now been lifted. In a letter of resignation the member made a complaint against the Principal without consultation with the Union. In addition several of the issues predated his membership of the Union. The Board of Governors has pursued the complaint as a Statutory Grievance and invited the member to a meeting of a Grievance Panel. The Senior Field Officer attended the meeting only as an observer and did not represent the member.

PARENTAL ALLEGATIONS

The Field Officer reported that a teacher was the subject of a letter to her Principal which called her teaching methods and standards into question. The Union solicitor, after consultation, sent a letter to the parent in question requesting an apology and a retraction of the reference he had made to the opinions of other parents. The parent complied with the former request but not the latter. After taking Counsel's advice the teacher decided not to take the case forward and accepted the letter received. The Union received a letter of thanks from the teacher.

ALLEGED ASSAULT

A Principal was accused of assaulting a child during a play rehearsal. The parents contacted the PSNI who carried out an investigation which involved members of staff, 60 pupils and the Principal himself. The Principal was permitted to be in school but have no contact with the child in question but the pressure of this situation caused the Principal to be out of school for a time. The DPP found there was no case to answer.

NOVEMBER 2009**DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

The Senior Field Officer accompanied a member to an interview held under the Disciplinary Procedure. The outcome of the procedure was a written warning which, has been accepted by our member who will not be appealing the decision.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

A member accepted a verbal warning given under the Disciplinary Procedure for the disclosure to pupils of contents of sealed letters to parents. The member eventually returned to work and at the absence interview she was handed a list of 9

unsubstantiated allegations. The interview was suspended by the Field Officer who subsequently wrote to the Chair of the Board of Governors asking for clarification of the procedure being used and evidence on which the allegations were based. A decision was taken to refer the matter to the UTU solicitor and the Senior Field Officer and General Secretary attended this meeting with the member. The solicitor has subsequently issued a letter to the Chair of the Board of Governors, which was copied to the employing authority. The letter says that the member will refuse to participate in the investigation until proper and detailed information with regard to the statements is provided to her.

STATUTORY ENTITLEMENT, HOLIDAY PAY

The General Secretary reported that she was currently liaising with the Union's solicitors to register a claim for unpaid statutory holiday pay for a teacher who has been off on protracted sick leave.

STATUTORY ENTITLEMENT, HOLIDAY PAY

The General Secretary stated that she was also investigating the possibility of a claim for holiday pay on behalf of a teacher currently off on maternity leave.

DECEMBER 2009**DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

The Senior Field Officer accompanied a member to an investigation held under the preliminary steps of the Disciplinary Procedure. Following the outcome of the investigation it was decided to proceed to the formal stage and the Senior Field Officer advised on a written submission and accompanied and supported the member through the formal procedure.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

The Senior Field Officer accompanied a member to an investigation held under the preliminary steps of the Disciplinary Procedure.

UNSATISFACTORY TEACHERS' PROCEDURE

Earlier this year the Senior Field Officer supported a member successfully through the formal stage of the Unsatisfactory Teachers' Procedure. However, following complaints the school has now decided to invoke the formal stage resulting from new evidence and also evidence relating back to the earlier informal stage. The school has provided detailed documentation and the Senior Field Officer is advising on a written submission for a meeting in mid-December.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The General Secretary reported that she had attended a Grievance investigation along with the Principal against whom the grievance had been taken. The sub-committee of the Board of Governors has stated that they will attempt to progress the issue as quickly as possible.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT PROCEDURE

The General Secretary stated that she had written a further letter to the employing authority regarding their failure to progress this case.

PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSION

The General Secretary reported that a member had been suspended due to allegations made by a former pupil dating back 9 years. The Union's solicitors have been involved in contacting the police to try to get clarity on the allegations. The General Secretary has been attempting to obtain suitable alternative employment for the teacher for the duration of the investigation.

PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSION

The teacher suspended since September due to allegations made by two classroom assistants has been advised by the police that they will not be pursuing the matter further.

JANUARY 2010**BULLYING & HARASSMENT**

The General Secretary reported that despite an enquiry having been initiated into the Principal's allegations of bullying and harassment by the Chairperson of the Board of Governors some 16 months previously no Report had as yet issued. The General Secretary had been she would have the Report forthwith. The General Secretary is seeking guidance from the Union's solicitors as to what legal mechanism can be utilised to obtain the Report.

PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSION

The General Secretary stated that a teacher suspended in September who had been informed that the police investigation had been completed and there would be no further action has still not been allowed to return to school pending an investigation by the Board of Governors. Ms Hall-Callaghan explained the difference in standard of proof between legal proceedings and internal disciplinary proceedings.

PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSION

The General Secretary confirmed that a preliminary hearing regarding the member suspended on allegations of assault had taken place immediately prior to Christmas. This was a technical meeting attended by the Union's solicitor and did not require the attendance of the member. The Senior Field Officer continues to provide her with support.

PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSION

The General Secretary reported that the member suspended just before Christmas had now learnt of the charges against him through the Union's solicitor who has been seeking an early interview with police for the member. The General Secretary gave a summary of the allegations and said that she, along with the Union's solicitor, was supporting the member and would be meeting with him the following day.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

The General Secretary reported on a very successful meeting held with a Principal and a Board Officer to discuss the possible future flexible working arrangements for a member of staff currently off with work-related stress.

COMPLAINT AGAINST TEACHER

The General Secretary said that she had met with the Principal and teacher to discuss how a complaint made against a teacher by two classroom assistants would be progressed. It was agreed that an Officer from the employing authority is to be asked to provide support.

LRA APPEAL PANEL, DISMISSAL

The General Secretary related the circumstances of a dismissal appeal she had been involved in the previous day for information.

PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSION

The Senior Field Officer accompanied a member who is currently on Precautionary Suspension to a briefing with Counsel and the Union solicitor in connection with an alleged assault on a pupil. The Public Prosecution Service has decided to proceed with the

FEBRUARY 2010**BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

The General Secretary reported that following a threat from the Union's solicitors to issue an injunction the Report of the investigation which commenced in September 2008 was forwarded to the UTU without the Appendices. A further letter threatening injunction was issued and the Appendices were received the following day. The Union's Solicitors have written to the SELB asking what their proposals are in light of the findings of this report.

MEDIATION

The General Secretary attended a joint union meeting along with representatives of ATL, NASUWT and NIPSA and mediators from the LRA to reassure members of the integrity of the process.

PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSION

The General Secretary visited a teacher currently suspended on child protection grounds to offer support and to explore the teacher's response to the charges which had been conveyed to him via the Union's solicitors.

DISMISSAL HEARING

The General Secretary reported the outcome of a Dismissal Appeal held at the LRA at which she was a Panel Member. It was noted that at the Hearing both sides had legal representation by agreement due to the seriousness of the charges and a Court of Appeal decision pending in England based on a Human Rights challenge.

13. UTU BENEVOLENT FUND

The UTU Benevolent Fund exists to provide financial assistance to the spouse, partner or other relative of a member who dies in service. Occasionally it provides assistance to members experiencing hardship.

Each year the Branches make a donation to the Union's Benevolent Fund and in addition money is raised by holding a ballot at the Union's Annual Conference. There are also occasional donations by individuals who may or may not be members of the Union.

During the 2009/2010 year no members died in service, an unusual but very welcome circumstance.

14. OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED BY CEC

The Central Executive Committee considered a wide range of issues other than those covered already in this report. The following gives an indication of the type of issues discussed:

- EI & ETUCE Policy Documents
- Public Appointments
- DE School Buildings Handbook
- Full Service Schools
- Nursery issues
- Consultation Documents
- International Charity Donations
- Lift Off Project
- Commonwealth Teachers' Group
- Rural Schools
- General Teaching Council, NI
- Health & Safety
- Professional Qualification for Headship
- Teaching Awards
- Global Campaign for Education
- Faith Schools
- INCAs
- Protection of Public Services
- Development Proposals for Schools
- Teacher Education
- Assessment & Reporting
- Inspections
- Fringe Services

15. TEACHER UNITY

The past year has been a very positive one in terms of teacher unity. Following the mediation exercise by ICTU which mended the rift in the NITC in May 2009 relationships between all the teaching unions have been for the most part harmonious. The trip to Montgomery County, USA, funded by the Department of Education, at the end of May 2009 convinced the teaching unions of the absolute necessity to work collaboratively. The possible changes to systems and structures that ESA will bring about, coupled with an ever-increasing pressure on budgets, has made it imperative that all the unions focus their attention on achieving the best possible outcomes for members through negotiation.

Following on from the agreement through mediation the legal action by NASUWT and ATL was terminated.

The five recognised unions have worked very closely together in presenting joint policy decisions to the political parties and to the Education Committee. The most successful example of joint working has been the level of co-operation regarding the Special Educational Needs Review. As well as making individual responses NITC produced a joint response. The issuing of joint advice and joint press statements on Transfer 2010 is a further example of the closer working relationships that allow for such a co-ordinated view from teachers to be presented.

UTU and INTO have continued to build on their joint working arrangements, with joint training seminars, joint conferences and joint campaigning on a number of issues such as Teaching Allowances, Class Size and Funding. The President of UTU, Lexie Scott, and the Northern Chair of INTO, Kevin Smyth, have taken this work forward during the past year, co-ordinating the campaigns and organising a very successful joint Leadership Conference in January 2010.

In yet another move towards teacher unity INTO and UTU joined with UCU in launching a "Making Education Count" campaign in Stormont in January 2010. This will provide a network for lobbying our local politicians on a joint basis with the advantage of covering all three levels of education in NI. UCU continues to be based in UTU Headquarters. The Association of Educational Psychologists is affiliated to UTU and also uses UTU Headquarters as its base in NI.

16. UTU MARKETING

UTU PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Central Executive Committee continues to retain the services of ASITIS Consulting to assist UTU with Public Relations matters. This has ensured that the UTU profile remains high in both local regional publications.

The CEC wishes to record its sincere thanks and appreciation of the very high quality of work done by Mandi Miller of ASITIS. Mandi liaises with the General Secretary of UTU on a regular basis to plan and execute the agreed media programme. Mandi is a skilled journalist with specialist knowledge of the Education sector and she ensures that UTU is kept well-advised on media opportunities.

During 2009/2010 discussions took place within the Central Executive Committee about developing a new UTU logo. A number of suggestions were considered, including engaging specialist design input.

17. BRITISH AND IRISH GROUP OF TEACHERS' UNIONS (BIGTU)

A meeting of the General Secretaries and Presidents of the British and Irish Group of Teachers' Unions (BIGTU) takes place once per year to discuss issues that affect teachers throughout the UK and Republic of Ireland and to agree policy and strategy on issues at European and World level. The UTU President and General Secretary are usually the only two representatives from Northern Ireland attending BIGTU meetings.

In addition there is a meeting of General Secretaries held once per year in advance of the main meeting to agree an agenda and discuss priorities. The General Secretaries also keep in touch through email and by telephone contact.

Paul Bennett, UCU, is engaged as Secretary to the group on a part-time basis by agreement with UCU and funded proportionately by all the BIGTU unions. The UTU would wish to place on record its sincere thanks to Paul for the excellent manner in which he services the Group. Paul is a Vice President of Educational International (EI) and is extremely well-placed to keep the group informed on current issues.

Ronnie Smith, General Secretary of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), attends the meetings and as President of the European Region of EI is right at the centre of policy-making. The UTU wishes to place on record its appreciation of how professionally Ronnie has undertaken the difficult job of President and congratulates him on his return for a further period of office.

The hosting of meetings is rotated on a country by country basis with the Chairs of the meetings generally coming from the hosting organisation(s). During 2009 BIGTU was hosted by the National Union of Teachers (NUT) and the agenda for the main meeting was discussed at a meeting of General Secretaries in January 2009 at the NUT Headquarters, Hamilton House, London.

The Presidents and General Secretaries meeting for 2009 was held in the NUT Training facility, Stoke Rochford Hall, Lincolnshire which is a beautiful old manor house set in wonderful rural surroundings which was formerly a teacher training establishment. Unfortunately there was a serious fire at Stoke Rochford a few years

ago but it has now been fully restored to its former glory. The NUT runs a variety of training courses for members there, including a number of accredited CPD courses.

Christine Blower, NUT General Secretary, chaired the first half of the meeting and welcomed colleagues to Stoke Rochford. Charlie Lennon, Deputy General Secretary, EI and Lillemor Darinder, General Secretary of the Nordic Group of Teacher Unions were in attendance.

Christine referred to the recent tragic death of Mandy Haehner, Ex President of the NASUWT, and the President of NASUWT, Julian Chapman, paid tribute to her. Christine congratulated Ronnie Smith on the recent award of an OBE and noted the award of MBE to Dan Taubman of UCU.

It was noted that while some apparent progress had been made with Social Dialogue there remained considerable scepticism about the practicalities of representing a diverse range of employers and unions in each country on the basis of single person representation. It was agreed to keep matters under review.

Jerry Bartlett, NASUWT and a member of the World Executive Board of EI reported on discussions in the World Board regarding the world economic crisis. The Group noted that the changeover of European Vice Presidents on the World Executive had taken place smoothly with Haldis Holst of Norway taking over from Patrick Gonthier of France. It was agreed that election strategy for the next World elections should be discussed during 2010.

Charlie Lennon described the complex environment within which EI operates, seeking to reconcile different cultures and practices. He noted the need to respect and accommodate traditions other than Anglo-Saxon.

An extensive discussion took place on the proposed changes to the Pan-European Structure of EI. It was agreed that the Secretary would respond to the consultation on behalf of the Group, but that each member union should also put in its own response. A 'flyer' was agreed and member organisations undertook to take up any

opportunities that might arise to promote the proposed new constitution. It was also agreed that member unions would meet in Warsaw in the early evening before the Pan-European Conference to refine tactics and liaise with the Nordic unions.

John Carr, INTO, raised the need to improve representation at European level activities like the School Leadership seminar and the Research and Communication Networks.

An election strategy was confirmed for posts at President, Vice President and country seat levels.

Ian Murch, NUT, chaired the second half of the meeting when Rob Copeland reported on the recent UCU initiative to launch a solidarity agreement to fight the global marketisation of tertiary education. Discussions also took place on Palestine, Colombia and Venezuela.

The NUT then presented a paper on the global economic crisis which is impacting on teachers worldwide, including in the UK and Ireland, where public sector pensions in particular were being targetted. It was agreed that there was a real need to quantify the economic and social consequences of a failure to support education and health services during a recession. It was further agreed that this should be a substantive item on the agenda of the EI European Conference.

Christine Blower reported on the setting up of the Steve Sinnott Foundation with the aim of working towards the Millenium Development goals for education. The meeting ended with a report from Charlie Lennon on arrangements for the World Congress in 2011, including the measures taken in response to the criticisms made by BIGTU following the Berlin World Congress in 2007.

The General Secretaries met on 8th February 2010 in London. Ronnie Smith and Paul Bennett gave a comprehensive report of developments post the European Conference at which the proposed changes to the Constitution had failed to be adopted by a very small margin. The interpretation of the result, which had taken account of the abstentions, is due to go to the World Board for their ruling. It was suggested that a further European Conference may be necessary to resolve the issue in the autumn.

The Irish unions reported on the recent breakdown of a proposed deal with the

government in relation to public sector pay which was followed by an announcement of stringent cuts to salaries for all public employees. It was suggested that pensions may also be under threat.

Global solidarity, support for Haiti and developments in Ethiopia and Turkey were discussed.

The agenda for the June meeting of Presidents and General Secretaries was agreed, to include the following:

- (i) Report of developments in EI Europe
- (ii) Electoral strategy and motions for World Congress
- (iii) The economic crisis and Social Dialogue
- (iv) Solidarity issues, to include capacity building/twinning

Jerry Bartlett gave a report of the World Executive Board, including the fact that the previous President of EI had been elected to government in South Africa and may well be Education Minister by the time of the 2011 World Congress. It was noted that Susan Hopgood, Australia, has taken over as EI President.

18. STANDING CONFERENCE FOR PRIMARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

Standing Conference is an important opportunity for unions to meet other key stakeholders in education in order to listen to and put forward views, concerns and possible solutions. During the last year there were two joint Primary and Secondary Standing Conferences. The meetings were held on 28th May and 25th November, both at Greenmount Agricultural Campus.

Many of the current major issues were discussed with representatives from educational stakeholders including the Department of Education, Teachers' Unions, Education and Library Boards, CCEA, CCMS, and C2K. The UTU representatives were Primary : Alistair Orr, George McVeigh, Melanie Houston and Lexie Scott – Secondary : Marie Holmes and Stephen McCord. There was an excellent representation from UTU at both meetings.

Meetings were chaired by Robson Davison from the Department of Education. Areas covered in the meetings in 2009 included the SEN Review, ESA update, Every School a Good School, Transfer Procedure, Sustainable School/ Area Based Planning, Funding for Schools and Inspection Matters.

The Primary Teachers' Council met prior to each Standing Conference. The Primary Teachers' Council is made up of representatives of the teacher unions and provides the opportunity for the unions to discuss the issues being brought to the Standing Conference by Teachers' Side and Management Side prior to the meeting.

19. STANDING CONFERENCE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Two representatives from each of the five teacher unions (UTU, INTO, ATL, NASUWT & NAHT) meet with representatives from the Department of Education, Inspectorate, ELB's and representatives from other interested groups such as the Health Service and educational psychologists. The meetings are chaired jointly by the Assistant Permanent Secretary, Robson Davison and Colm Davis.(NAHT)

UTU is represented by Diane Nugent and Sally McKee (Hon Sec for Teachers' Side).

Special Standing Conference met in October 2009. Due to the delay in releasing the consultation on the Special Needs review, Special Standing Conference was delayed from June to October 2009. Each Union prepared a response to the review and Teachers' Side met prior to the Secondary Standing Conference to discuss the main areas of concern.

Marlene Collins and members of the Department of Education SEN review team attended Special Standing Conference to hear the concerns and to answer questions.

In response to pressure from the unions the consultation period was extended to end January 2010 so we do not know yet if teachers' concerns have been addressed in the revised review document.

The UTU response to the SEN review is available on the UTU web-site: www.utu.edu

20. CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (CEC)

OFFICERS

Mr Lexie Scott, President
Mr Lewis Love, Vice-President
Miss Melanie Houston, Ex-President
Ms Avril Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary

HONORARY TREASURER

Mr George McVeigh

BELFAST AREA ASSOCIATION

Miss Diane Nugent
Miss Brenda McMullen
Mr Stephen McCord

NORTH-EASTERN AREA ASSOCIATION

Mrs Gillian Scott
Mrs Jennifer Campbell
Mr Audrey Philson
Mr Mark Creelman

SOUTHERN AREA ASSOCIATION

Mrs Lindsay Miskelly
Mr Stanley Poots
Miss Claire Parkinson
Mrs Marie Holmes

WESTERN AREA ASSOCIATION

Mrs Maureen Nutt
Mrs Rosemary Barton

SOUTH-EASTERN AREA ASSOCIATION

Mrs Carney Cumper
Mr Stephen Cumper
Miss Gillian Garrett

OBSERVERS

Mrs Sally McKee, Chair, GTC NI
Mr Alistair Orr, GTC NI
Mrs Thea Patton, GTC NI

21. SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE C.E.C.

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr L Scott, President	Mr L Love, Vice-President
Miss M Houston, Ex-President	Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary
Mr G McVeigh, Honorary Treasurer	Mr S Poots
Mrs R Barton	Miss G Garrett

Convener: Miss M Houston, Ex-President

EDUCATION AND POLICY SUB-COMMITTEE

Mrs A Stewart, Field Officer	Mrs L Squance
Mr L Love, Vice-President	Mr A Orr
Mrs A Philson	Mrs J Sturgeon
Miss D Nugent	Miss G Neill
Mrs M Nutt	Ms S Thompson
Mrs J Campbell	Miss M Houston
Mr S McCord	Miss C Parkinson

Convener: Mr A Stewart, Field Officer

SALARIES AND CONDITIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr L Scott, President	Mr L Love, Vice-President
Miss M Houston, Ex-President	Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary
Mr M Graves, Senior Field Officer	

Convener: Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary

ORGANISATION AND MEMBERSHIP SUB-COMMITTEE

Mrs B McMullen	Mrs S McKee
Mrs L Miskelly	Mrs V Whiteside
Mr M Creelman	Mrs T Patton
Mrs M Holmes	Miss G Neill
Mr S Cumper	

Convener: Mr S Cumper

ICTU/BIGTU SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr L Scott, President	Mrs S McKee
Mr L Love, Vice-President	Mrs B Brand
Miss M Houston, Ex-President	Miss G Neill
Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary	Mrs J Reid, Field Officer

Convener: Miss M Houston, President

POLITICAL AND EQUALITY SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr M Graves, Senior Field Officer	Mrs S McKee
Mrs J Reid, Field Officer	Mrs M McClure
Mr S Poots	Mrs T Patton
Miss G Garrett	Mr C Cumper

Convener: Mr M Graves, Senior Field Officer

GTC SUB-COMMITTEE

Miss M Houston, Ex-President	Mrs A Stewart, Field Officer
Mrs R Barton	Mrs S McKee
Mrs T Patton	Mr A Orr

Convener: Mr A Orr

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Mrs A Stewart, Field Officer	Mrs M Scott
Mr S Cumper	Mrs J Sturgeon
Mrs L Miskelly	Mrs E McCord
Mrs M Nutt	Ms V Brown
Mrs G Scott	

Convener: Mrs A Stewart, Field Officer

CONFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr L Scott, President
 Miss M Houston, Ex-President
 Mr R McVeigh, Honorary Treasurer
 Mrs G Scott

Convener: Mrs G Scott

EDITORIAL PANEL – UTU NEWS

Mr L Love, Vice-President
 Mrs C Cumper
 Miss D Nugent

Convener/Editor: Miss G Garrett

PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr L Scott, President
 Miss M Houston, Ex-President
 Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary
 Mrs M Nutt

Convener: Mr L Scott, President

RULES AND CONSTITUTION SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr L Scott, President
 Miss M Houston, Ex-President
 Mr G McVeigh, Honorary Treasurer

Mr L Love, Vice-President
 Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary
 Mrs J Reid, Field Officer
 Mrs C Cumper

Miss G Garrett
 Mrs J Campbell

Mr L Love, Vice-President
 Mr R McVeigh, Honorary Treasurer
 Mrs A Stewart, Field Officer
 Mr T Shields

Mr L Love, Vice-President
 Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary
 Mr S Cumper

Convener: Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary

HEALTH AND SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

Mrs C Cumper
 Mrs J Reid, Field Officer
 Mrs R Barton
 Mrs J Campbell
 Mrs A Philson

Convener: Mrs C Cumper

APPOINTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr L Scott, President
 Miss M Houston, Ex-President
 Mr G McVeigh, Honorary Treasurer
 Mr S Poots

Convener: Mr L Scott, President

Mrs L Squance
 Mrs A Orr
 Mrs A McKee
 Miss G Neill
 Mrs B Weir

Mr L Love, Vice-President
 Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary
 Mrs J Campbell
 Mrs R Barton

22. UTU REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL BODIES

NORTHERN IRELAND TEACHERS' COUNCIL

Mr L Scott, President	Mr L Love, Vice-President
Miss M Houston, Ex-President	Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary
Mr M Graves, Senior Field Officer	

Reserves:

Mr S Poots	Mrs J Reid, Field Officer
------------	---------------------------

UTU/INTO JOINT BOARD

Mr L Scott, President	Mr L Love, Vice-President
Miss M Houston, Ex-President	Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary
Mr M Graves, Senior Field Officer	

Reserves:

Mr G McVeigh, Honorary Treasurer	Mr S Poots
----------------------------------	------------

NORTHERN IRELAND TEACHERS' SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Mr L Scott, President	Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary
-----------------------	--

Reserves:

Mr L Love Vice-President	Miss M Houston, Ex-President
Mr M Graves, Senior Field Officer	

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary
Mrs R Barton

PRIMARY TEACHERS' COUNCIL

Mr L Scott, President	Miss M Houston, Ex-President
Mr RG McVeigh, Honorary Treasurer	Mr S Poots
Mrs C Cumper	Mrs M Nutt
Mr M Creelman	

Reserves:

Mrs A Philson

STANDING CONFERENCE FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION

Mr L Scott, President	Miss M Houston, Ex-President
Mr RG McVeigh, Honorary Treasurer	Mr S Poots
Mr A Orr	Mrs C Cumper

Reserves:

Mrs C Cumper	Mrs M Nutt
Mr M Creelman	

STANDING CONFERENCE FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mrs M Holmes	Mr S McCord
--------------	-------------

Reserve:

Mr L Love, Vice-President	Mrs R Barton
---------------------------	--------------

TEACHERS' PANEL – STANDING CONFERENCE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Miss M Houston, Ex-President	Mrs S McKee
Miss D Nugent	Mr G McVeigh, Honorary Treasurer

STANDING CONFERENCE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Mrs SE McKee	Miss D Nugent
--------------	---------------

WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Ms G Garrett

UTU/INTO JOINT SERVICES

Mr L Love, Vice-President
Mr G McVeigh, Honorary Treasurer

Mrs J Reid, Field Officer

ICTU WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

Mrs J Reid, Field Officer

Mrs L Miskelly

ICTU HEALTH AND SAFETY

Miss M Houston, Ex-President

Mrs C Cumper

ICTU EQUALITY COMMITTEE

Mr M Graves, Senior Field Officer

Mrs J Reid, Field Officer

ICTU EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Mr L Scott, President

Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary

ICTU LBGT

Mr L Scott, President

Mrs J Reid, Field Officer

ICTU ETHNIC MINORITY

Mr L Scott, President

Mrs J Reid, Field Officer

ICTU DISABILITY

Miss M Houston, Ex-President
Sally McKee

ICTU GLOBAL SOLIDARITY

Mrs A Stewart, Field Officer
Miss G Garrett

ICTU YOUTH

Miss D Nugent

ICTU EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Mr L Scott, President
Miss M Houston, Ex-President

ICTU CULTURE AND ARTS

Miss G Garrett

23. HON. VICE-PRESIDENTS AND TRUSTEES

HONORARY VICE PRESIDENTS

Mr SI Davidson, OBE
Mrs EH Kerr
Mr D Allen, MBE
Mrs M Alexander, MBE
Mr R Calvin

UNION BUILDING TRUSTEES

Mr D Allen, MBE
Miss H Beattie
Mr M McClean
Mrs S McKee
Mr A Orr

Convener: Avril Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary

PENSION TRUSTEES

Mr L Scott, President
Mr G McVeigh, Honorary Treasurer
Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary
Mrs S McKee

Convener: Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary

UNION FUND TRUSTEES

Mr L Scott, President,
Mr L Love, Vice-President
Miss M Houston, Ex-President
Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary
Mr G McVeigh, Honorary Treasurer
Mrs A McHenry, Financial Executive Officer

24. UTU REPRESENTATIVES ON AREA CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

NORTH-EASTERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

Mrs G Scott, Moorfields Primary School, Ballymena
Mr G McVeigh, Ballymoney Model Primary, Ballymoney
Mrs J Cavalleros, Retired Principal
Mrs J Sturgeon, Temporary Teacher
Mrs L McKay, Ballyclare Secondary, Ballyclare

SOUTHERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

Mr TDO Shields, King's Park Primary School, Lurgan
Mr D Dickson, Armstrong Primary School, Armagh
Miss MM Houston, Fivemiletown Primary School, Newry
Mrs L Miskelly, Cortamlet Primary School, Newry
Mrs M Holmes, Banbridge High School, Banbridge
Dr C Steen, Newry High School, Newry

SOUTH-EASTERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

Mr SJ Cumper, Harding Memorial Primary School, Belfast
Mrs C Cumper, Killyleagh Primary School, Downpatrick
Mrs SE McKee, Temporary Teacher
Miss G Garrett, Donaghadee Primary School, Donaghadee

WESTERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

Mrs MF Nutt, Burnfoot Primary School, Limavady
Mrs M McClure, Temporary Teacher
Mrs M Scott, Temporary Teacher
Mrs A Orr, Temporary Teacher
Mrs R Barton, Devenish College, Kesh
Mr L Love, Omagh High School, Omagh

25. ATTENDANCES AT CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

POSSIBLE ATTENDANCES Nine Meetings – (unless otherwise stated in brackets)

OFFICERS

Mr L Scott, President	8
Mr L Love, Vice-President	6
Miss M Houston, Ex-President	7
Ms AE Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary	7

OFFICIAL/CLERICAL STAFF – in attendance

Mr M Graves, Second Field Officer	3 (3)
Mrs J Reid, Field Officer	5 (5)
Mrs A Stewart, Field Officer	2 (2)
Mrs K Taylor, Executive Officer	5 (5)
Miss L Osborne, Clerical Officer	3 (3)

HONORARY TREASURER

Mr RG McVeigh	5
---------------	---

NORTH-EASTERN AREA

Mrs A Philson	8
Mrs G Scott	7
Mrs J Campbell	9
Mr M Creelman	8

SOUTHERN AREA

Mrs L Miskelly	0
Miss C Parkinson	6
Mr S Poots	7
Ms M Holmes	8

WESTERN AREA

Mrs M Nutt	8
Mrs R Barton	7

SOUTH-EASTERN AREA

Mrs C Cumper	9
Mr S Cumper	6
Miss GB Garrett	4

BELFAST AREA

Miss D Nugent	2
Miss B McMullen	5
Mr S McCord	6

OBSERVER

Mrs SE McKee	6
Mr AS Orr	8
Mrs T Patton	4 (6)

26. CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS 2009

A policy document, reflecting the issues debated at the 2009 Conference, was drawn up and widely distributed before the beginning of the 2009/10 academic year. It was sent to individuals, schools, politicians and statutory bodies, but the failure to implement ESA undoubtedly impacted on the Union's ability to progress many of the claims effectively. The existing employing authorities showed reluctance to move ahead with matters without the approval of ESA and in an attempt to improve negotiations a representative of ESA was invited to attend the JWP

Following the re-constitution of the NITC all the unions have been in discussions regarding the implementation of the recommendations of the Curran Report, Part 2. Priorities were identified, with achievement of 10% planning, Preparation and Assessment for teachers a priority. This was in line with the Resolution proposed by Clogher Valley Branch at Conference 2009.

Following on from the excellent campaigning work already done regarding Primary Funding it seems that the Department of Education have listened to the concerns raised regarding inequitable funding. The Minister has indicated that there is to be a Fundamental Review of School Funding but as yet there are no Terms of Reference drawn up. The NITC has indicated its desire to be fully involved in this Review.

Special Needs has been a major focus for UTU due to the Special Educational Needs Review. The Union's response on the Consultation included the content of the Armagh Branch resolution passed unanimously at Conference 2009.

The resolution on class size has been taken forward through the joint INTO/UTU Board with the launch of a major campaign calling for a maximum class size of 18 pupils in foundation and Key Stage 1, 24 pupils in Key Stage 2 and 20 pupils in Key Stage 3. This not only takes forward but builds upon the resolution at last year's Conference as it includes the secondary sector.

The call for funding for premature retirement was met as the Department of Education did not put in place the legislation to reduce pensions that they had proposed. The fact that the premature retirement conditions were only finalised at

the end of June caused untold distress to teachers and left some schools in chaos, nevertheless the UTU achieved its policy objective of maintaining the normal premature retirement procedures for a further year. The unions have consistently asked that if changes are to be made to these arrangements there should be adequate notice given and a phasing in of the new arrangements.

The UTU held its firm policy line on Transfer and issued joint advice with all the other teacher unions during the very difficult period during the autumn term when Entrance Tests were being carried out in some schools. The primary sector felt the pressure that these tests brought to bear on them, but throughout the UTU maintained its position in support of the Revised Curriculum and opposed to the use of any form of standardised or predictive testing being used as a tool for transferring children from primary to post-primary schools.

UTU continues to liaise with the Department of Education on the issue of Wi-Fi in schools and the need for sufficient resources for training in Health & Safety. Through NITC the Union has been negotiating with the Department of Education to try to establish a place in determining budget decisions at an early stage, as in the Montgomery County model, and this should assist in prioritising such issues.

Mental Health and Wellbeing of Pupils continues to be high on the Union's agenda. In February 2010 the UTU issued a further press release in support of an initiative which had developed as a result of our earlier press coverage of the topic. A local theatre company, Replay, has developed a play around the topic of mental health and UTU fully supports this as a means to further raising awareness.

UTU has continued to monitor C2K but has not yet been granted stakeholder access to the data.

The resolution welcoming the work of the INTO/UTU Board and supporting continued close co-operation with a view to creating a federation has been implemented in full.

27. THANKS AND APPRECIATION

The President and members of the Central Executive Committee wish to place on record their thanks to the Conveners of Sub-Committees, the Officers of Branches, Area Associations, the FIT Group and the Leadership Forum, and School Representatives for their outstanding work throughout the year. Without their help the Officers, members of CEC, Officials and Headquarters staff could not provide the excellent service that UTU members deserve.

The Union wishes to thank George McVeigh most sincerely for the tremendous work he has done during the past six years as Honorary Treasurer. Under the Rules and Constitution George is unfortunately no longer eligible for re-election to the post as he has served the maximum time permitted. This is George's second period of office on the Central Executive Committee and he is a very valued member of that group, so it is with much regret that the Union wishes him farewell and thanks him for his wise counsel and conscientious oversight of the Union's finances.

The General Secretary wishes to record her sincere thanks to the President, Lexie Scott, who, like George, is in his second period of long service on the Central Executive Committee. Lexie brought his considerable political experience to the negotiating meetings and contributed fully in developing strategy at a time when its importance was crucial.

Lexie carried out his public relations role very professionally and with great skill. He represented the Union at a wide variety of seminars and conferences, including the European Conference of Education International in Warsaw in November. He worked closely with Kevin Smyth, Northern Chair of INTO, in developing joint materials and was a very competent chair of both CEC and the Joint Board of UTU and INTO, ensuring that the relationship between the two organisations was encouraged to flourish.

Lexie initiated discussion on a number of important internal issues during his year as President, including the need for re-organisation of Union structures and the need to upgrade the Union's technology. He also wrote a discussion paper on Faith Schools. His inimitable humour ensured that CEC meetings were never dull!

The General Secretary would also wish to place on record her thanks to each and every member of the Central Executive Committee whose support through a recent bereavement was very much appreciated.

CEC members work extremely hard on behalf of the members and ensure that the teacher's voice is heard. UTU prides itself on its democracy. At the monthly CEC meetings representatives from throughout NI and from all types of school bring the views of the members to the table before any policy decision is taken. This method of staying connected to the "chalk face" is supplemented by information gleaned by the Officials from school visits and also by telephone queries and comments from members.

The UTU News, published on a termly basis, is an excellent balance of information and advice. The Union would like to congratulate its Editor, Gillian Garrett, on her recent marriage and thank her most sincerely for the hours of work she puts into the publication.

The General Secretary, Officials and CEC thank the Union's solicitors, Shean Dickson Merrick, for the first-class service they continue to provide for UTU members. The Union's association with this firm goes back very many years. The quality of advice from all the senior partners is much appreciated, particularly so in the past year when the Union experienced an unprecedented number of major legal cases, as can be evidenced from the Law & Tenure section of the report. The UTU also wishes to place on record its thanks to the barristers involved in providing support and legal opinion in the more serious cases.

The CEC and staff wish to thank Mervin McClean, Building Trustee and member of the Property sub-committee for his continued interest in the Headquarters building and for his very practical assistance in the day-to-day maintenance of the building and grounds.

The CEC and staff would also like to sincerely thank John Goodfellow, Computer Advisory Services, for his continued assistance in supporting the office technology.

All at UTU wish to record their best wishes to John for improved health and thank him for the dedicated service he has provided throughout the many years spent working with the Union.

There are many others with whom the staff and CEC interact on a regular basis in the course of carrying out the work of the UTU. The Union wishes to thank those people who have assisted in any way during the 2009/10 year, including Department of Education, ESA and employing authority personnel. The Union also wishes a long and happy retirement to those who have, or will, exit the education sector as a result of the transfer to ESA.

The UTU wishes to record its thanks to the two newly-appointed Building Trustees, Sally McKee and Alistair Orr, for accepting this very important role on behalf of the Union.

Finally, the General Secretary wishes to record her personal thanks to former General Secretaries, David Allen and Ray Calvin, for their continued interest in the Union and for their wise counsel. Also the General Secretary personally, and on behalf of the President and CEC, wishes a very sincere "thank you" to the staff of UTU who are a pleasure to work with. The sense of team spirit is incredible and the calibre of staff undoubtedly contributes significantly in providing such a superb all-round service to the members of UTU.

NOTES

NOTES

NOTES

NOTES

The UTU wishes to thank TK Consultancy for their input to the design of the Conference backdrop and graphics.



Ulster Teachers' Union

94 Malone Road, Belfast, BT9 5HP
T: 028 9066 2216 **F:** 028 9068 3296
E: office@utu.edu **W:** www.utu.edu

www.utu.edu



34 Old Kilmore Road, Moira, Co Armagh BT67 0LZ

Tel 028 92 619233

Fax 028 9261 9234

www.imex.co.uk

sales@imex.co.uk

Interactive Whiteboards

Data Projectors

Wireless Schoolpads

Digital Signage

Voting Systems

Audio Systems

ICT Software

Visualisers

Resources

Training

