

*INSPIRING TEACHERS: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE*

**100**  
UTU CENTENARY

## **Conference Report**

**Ulster Teachers' Union**

**Centenary Conference 2019**

**Slieve Donard Hotel, Newcastle**

**Thursday 4th - Friday 5th April 2019**





CONFERENCE THEME

“Inspiring Teachers: Past,  
Present and Future”



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

# Centenary Conference

## Report of the Central Executive Committee

For the year ended 31st March 2019

4th-5th April 2019

at the

Slieve Donard Hotel, Newcastle, Co Down

## Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	3
2.	UTU MEMBERSHIP	5
3.	HEAD OFFICE STAFF	10
4.	NORTHERN IRELAND TEACHERS' COUNCIL – (NITC)	12
5.	TEACHERS' NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE – JWP	14
6.	NITPS SCHEME ADVISORY BOARD	15
7.	IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS	20
8.	REPORTS FROM CEC SUB-COMMITTEES	22
9.	LAW AND TENURE	27
10.	UTU BENEVOLENT FUND	32
11.	A SELECTION OF OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED BY CEC	33
12.	TEACHER UNITY	34
13.	UTU MARKETING	35
14.	BRITISH AND IRISH GROUP OF TEACHERS' UNIONS	36
15.	CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (CEC)	38
16.	SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE CEC	39
17.	UTU REPRESENTATIVES ON EXTERNAL BODIES	42
18.	HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS AND TRUSTEES	43
19.	ATTENDANCES AT MEETINGS OF THE CEC	44
20.	CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS 2018	45
21.	THANKS AND APPRECIATION	46

**Avril Hall-Callaghan**  
GENERAL SECRETARY



## 1. Introduction

I am writing this introduction to the CEC Report this year on behalf of our General Secretary, Avril Hall-Callaghan. Avril is presently recuperating after a period of illness and I am sure you will all join with me in wishing her a speedy and full recovery. We all look forward to her presence at Annual Conference and to having the opportunity to pass on our continued good wishes in person.

Those of you who are avid readers of the CEC Report will notice that some sections are shorter and less detailed than in previous years. This, I can assure you, is not due to the fact that you are experiencing a change in authorship, but rather due to the work in which we have been engaged this year. The overwhelming support for the Industrial Action in schools is testament to the fact that members are well aware of the negotiations in which the teaching unions are involved with Management Side, and the boundaries of confidentiality within which these negotiations are operating have resulted in a restriction in reporting to date. Management Side effectively suspended the operation of JWP as a result of the action and the talks taking place, and much of the discussion at NITC centred around the issues which must also remain internal at this point. Any progress which we can report on other issues is contained in the relevant sections of the report. Despite the confines of confidentiality, we can, however, assure members that the key concerns which you have expressed are being addressed robustly in the negotiations. The ongoing dispute centres on teachers' concerns not only about pay but also around the issues arising out of excessive accountability which, in its turn, leads to excessive workload. The teaching unions are mindful of all of these factors as talks progress. I would also take this opportunity to remind members that it is they who will consider any proposal for the way forward which arises from these talks; the ultimate decision is not taken by those who represent you in the negotiations.

The continued absence of an Assembly, and hence an Education Minister, has also had a huge negative impact on our ability to progress the work of the UTU this year.

So much of what we wish to address requires either ministerial decision making or legislative change and this has been beyond our grasp. We continue to engage with the Department of Education regarding such issues, the most recent concerning the impending introduction of the Anti-Bullying Legislation 2016, but the situation limits progress. Unfortunately, external political factors are not suggesting a resolution to this particular problem any time soon.

The ever-tightening nature of the Education Budget, and so school budgets, continues to bring incredible pressure on schools with the fallout manifesting itself in a myriad of ways. There is growing media coverage on the untenable situations in which schools find themselves and we congratulate those UTU Principal members who have stepped forward to make this message public. UTU, with INTO and NEU, submitted a response to the Education Committee's Inquiry into Education Funding in Northern Ireland and we attended the hearing in Westminster to make the arguments; we further attended a follow-up consultation event in Strabane. The arguments were sympathetically received but, in the absence of local government, it is highly uncertain as to how such a response will manifest itself.

Schools continue to be frustrated by the lack of practical support from the EA, most notably in the area of Special Needs where ever-growing numbers of children are not receiving the resourcing and support they need. This lack of support further extends to HR issues, with Principals, and so Governors, trying to manage situations in the absence of the individual advice and guidance they need. We remain hopeful that the current process of transformation may effect a positive change but in the context of no funding change it can be difficult to remain optimistic.

This lack of support, combined with budgetary demands, contributes significantly to many negative factors which are sadly becoming part and parcel of the everyday lives of many teachers. Schools having to reduce staff leads to larger class sizes with less Classroom Assistant support. Sickness absence is rising with teachers

encountering huge issues with stress and mental health. The results from the ICTU Education Trade Union Group survey on assaults in schools, which will be shared fully in the near future, make frightening reading. The whole area of accessing and providing appropriate SEN support needs no explanation. The situation has led to an increase in the number of teachers requiring individual support from the union this year, some illustrations of which can be found in the report.

On a positive note, the efforts of the five recognised unions in working together to address these issues have led to productive and robust working relationships this year. It is the aim of all involved to restore professionalism and respect to teachers and we continue to work towards that goal. If the commitment in terms of time and availability of Management Side can be used as any indicator of success, we can remain cautiously optimistic about effecting what will be a positive outcome for all members.

In this our centenary year, I thank you for your continued support and commitment to the values of the Ulster Teachers' Union. I hope that UTU maintains its position as a highly-favoured choice for new entrants and that these values will continue to be reflected throughout schools in NI. I hope you enjoy reading this year's Report of the Ulster Teachers' Union.

## 2. UTU Membership

During 2018/19 the Ulster Teachers' Union offered membership to qualified teachers in the Nursery, Primary, Post Primary (including Voluntary Grammar), Preparatory and Special school sectors, provided they were registered as teachers with GTC NI. Student teachers are granted membership as Associate members, although they do not qualify for voting rights. Retired members may also opt to retain Associate status but may not be elected to posts within the UTU structures. Temporary teachers who are employed through NISTR can also be members, paying a proportion of salary similar dependent on their earnings.

The UTU membership remains steady at 6109 at the end of February 2019 and there are indications that membership may rise over the course of the year and into the next recruitment period based on enquiries made during school visits and discussions with students.

A large proportion of members are in the younger age category and many of them have become active union members through the Future in Teaching (FIT) Group. These young people are now becoming active in their local Branches and in their workplaces, taking on the role of school representative in many cases as well as fulfilling Branch Officer roles. At present 3 members of the FIT Group, including the current Chair of FIT, Aaron Davidson, sit on our Central Executive Committee. Those who have been elected on to the Executive work in a variety of areas and represent a number of Branches.

The impact of the FIT Group has been significant, due to the hard work of our Acting General Secretary, Jacquie White, who has nurtured the Group almost since its inception and Union officers and staff who continue to work with, encourage and communicate with students, NQTs and RQTs to ensure the success and growth of this group. Each year there is a FIT Conference in January which has grown in size and which feeds into the Annual Conference in March/April. Competition for places at both these residential events has spiralled and as a result the Union is in a very healthy position going into the future. Several FIT events were also organised in the Universities involving student/principal Q&A sessions and presentations to final year trainee teachers regarding terms and conditions of employment, class management and job applications. Leigh Cooper and Rebekka Gilpin have taken on roles in supporting the FIT Group and will continue to do so into the future. The exercise carried out to rebalance the teaching workforce by allowing teachers aged 55+ to exit without actuarial reduction (known as Investing in the Teaching Workforce) has enabled many of these young teachers to access permanent jobs.

At the time of going to print the present tranch of teachers exiting under this scheme will finally be retiring from their jobs making way for new appointees to take up their positions. There is no information at this point if the scheme will be rolled out again in subsequent years.

### TRAINING

UTU provides a programme of training for school representatives and has given one-to-one advice to newly-elected representatives where appropriate. The very successful programme of pre-retirement seminars has continued on a joint basis with INTO and are provided free through Platinum Financial Services who will provide individual advice to UTU and INTO members.

In January 2019 the UTU/INTO/NEU Annual Leadership Conference took place in the Tullylagan Hotel, Cookstown. It was very well-attended by a range of leaders from small to large primary and post-primary schools. The Children's Law Centre delivered a presentation on how schools can deal with the increasing challenging needs of pupils and an NEU principal member gave a traumatic talk on her personal experiences dealing with bullying and harassment through social media.

### PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE

As EA continued to reorganise during the 2018/19 year UTU found it was receiving an ever-increasing plethora of requests for advice and assistance from schools. Added to this, the reduction to school budgets proved very challenging for many schools and resulted in many redundancies of teaching and support staff. When it came to providing for pupils with special educational needs many schools found there was insufficient money in the central budget of EA to provide the necessary support. The fact that EA was still establishing its structures made it a very challenging time for those schools that needed to access additional support. Indeed there were well-publicised stories of parents whose children were not being given places in the correct settings due to delays in assessing their needs or lack of sufficient available places.

Reductions in the number of employees coupled with changes in line management structures within EA has continued to cause problems this year in accessing efficient and effective services in many areas of the EA. The Education Authority still has some way to go in terms of functioning smoothly and the lack of financial resources does not help matters.

UTU regularly provides support as follows:

- advice to individual members by phone or email
- regular meetings with school representatives
- UTU Updates usually sent on a regular basis
- reports and comments on a wide variety of current topics posted on our updated UTU website
- individual advice on issues such as salaries, conditions of service, collective procedures, appeals procedures, legal claims and defences and information on statutory entitlement
- advice to members on career progression, appointments, PRSD and salary appeals
- advice on retirement options

Not surprisingly a lot of the queries received this year have focussed on ongoing Industrial Action and the boycott of Inspections.

The Central Executive Committee was very determined that UTU Industrial Action should not impact on the pupils but focus on outside agencies such as the Department of Education and ETI. This action has highlighted the concerns expressed by the majority of teachers that the Inspection process is not fit for purpose and creates an inordinate amount of workload. Despite our efforts to impress on the Chief Inspector that this regime must change before irreparable harm is done to teachers there has been no attempt to alter course. Negotiations are ongoing and have been generally positive. However there are obstacles still to be overcome. UTU will of course approach further talks with vigour and determination and strive to bring closer a satisfactory outcome to the issues around workload, pay and accountability which are still firmly on the table.

The UTU once again engaged fully in the Redundancy process and through its operation throughout NI, most of the redundant teachers who wished to be redeployed were found posts. We would like to record our thanks to the employing authorities for assisting in the process.

Principal members have increasingly been turning to UTU for support and advice as the number of personnel in the employing authorities continues to decrease. This year has again been unprecedented in terms of the political situation and at the time of writing it is still unclear what lies ahead in the absence of an Education Minister and indeed a Government. Yet again school budgets are under pressure and are significantly reduced and that does not auger well for teachers, pupils or indeed their parents.

The high number of Disciplinary charges against teachers and principals has continued unabated and Field Officers have all been involved in defending members under attack. Some illustrative cases are listed under the Law and Tenure section of this Report. We are ably assisted in advising members by our solicitors Shean Dickson Merrick and I would like to place on record our sincere appreciation to the team of experts there, including Senior Partner, Maura McKay and solicitors, Glenn Breen and Owen Hutchinson who accompany our members to interviews under caution with the PSNI. UTU members can be assured that they are given the best possible legal advice from local solicitors with many years of specialised knowledge of the legal process and norms in this jurisdiction. From time to time we also employ barristers to provide Counsel's Opinion as to the merits of a case and I would like to put on record our thanks to them, notably Martin Wolfe, QC, who will advise on potential Industrial Tribunal cases.

UTU Officials are asked from time to time to sit on Panels by the Labour Relations Agency to adjudicate on appeals brought by other teacher unions. This is an excellent way for UTU Officials to gain expertise on aspects of teachers' contracts as the other Panel members are comprised of a representative from the employing authorities and an independent chairperson with a legal or quasi-legal background.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

The following publications were updated where necessary and made available to members and prospective members on request:

- "Your First September" booklet
- UTU Services and Benefits leaflet
- 2017/2019 Policy statement
- UTU Application Form (although members may now join online)
- UTU Membership Subscription leaflet
- Health & Safety booklet
- "Why Join the UTU?" leaflet
- UTU Year Planner

The new app which was developed in 2016 under the supervision of President, Mark Creelman is available to download free. All the information on Branch and Area Officers and CEC members is available to download from the UTU website and we have a calendar of events which lets members know what is happening in their area.

The UTU still supplies the Membership Plus cards which provide members with valuable discounts on a range of goods and services locally. They have been well-

received and represent value for money for members. It has proved to be a good recruiting tool for school representatives and we also value the ongoing support the company provides to us.

Our officials, Leigh Cooper and Rebekka Gilpin, assisted by Denise Allely, Membership Officer and Tony McCabe, Clerical Officer attended the student recruitment days at the following venues:

School of Education, QUB  
Stranmillis University College  
St Mary's University College  
School of Education, University of Ulster, Coleraine

UTU jointly recruits with INTO and NEU and the students are happy to see the unions working together and providing joint recruitment documentation. We have joint display stands and joint branding at these events and students join our organisations by completing just one application form.

UTU continued in the very beneficial Partnership arrangement with NEU in the UK and Wales and EIS in Scotland. The link with INTO includes teachers transferring across the border to the Republic of Ireland and ensures that there is an easy route for any teacher who belongs to one of these four teacher unions to automatically receive reciprocal membership when changing jurisdiction.

The reports of the Field Officers and the Organising Officer follow:

#### **FIELD OFFICER'S REPORT – Lewis Love**

The lack of a Minister of Education as a result of a dysfunctional Executive alongside the severe budget constraints placed on schools has led to a steep decline in teacher morale. This in turn has led to a significant increase in casework for officials of the Union. The current Industrial Action is popular with members, especially the aspect relating to non-co-operation with the ETI. As the Industrial Action is still on-going (at the date of writing) it will be important that the negotiations ensure the Inspectorate do not take retribution on those schools that did not participate in the inspection process by making unannounced inspections. Throughout the year the Field Officers have attended those schools that have had a visit from ETI to support the Principals and staff when necessary.

The dissolution of the five Area Boards has contributed to an increased workload for Officials as the emerging Education Authority is underfunded and understaffed

in terms of numbers, but more worryingly experience. It will take time for the organisation to develop into one that will give confidence to those that it serves. The Field Officer has represented and supported members of the Union employed in the Peripatetic services relating to conditions of service and disciplinary procedures as EA introduce new contracts.

The Area Planning rationalisation exercise will cause amalgamations, school closures and the rise of federations. This will see an increase in redundancies and appeals. A particular area of concern the Field Officer is involved with is the proposed re-organisation of special education provision in the greater Belfast area where it is proposed to place some pupils with particular needs in mainstream schools. This proposal may spread to all areas and the impact on mainstream schools in terms of staff training and development will potentially cause difficulties for the management of the schools and the teachers.

The Field Officer, along with colleagues, faced an increase in workload relating to 'work related stress' complaints from teachers. This is due to numerous factors: parental use of Social media; teacher use of social media; perceived bullying and harassment, often related to poor staff morale; Boards of Governors not functioning properly; poor inter-personal relationships in schools and the financial pressures imposed on schools. The latter being the catalyst for the other factors.

The Field Officer organised and attended joint retirement seminars with INTO, and a Joint Leadership Conference with sister unions NEU and INTO.

#### **FIELD OFFICER REPORT – Leigh Cooper**

This year sees UTU celebrate its 100th year and it has been a time of change. Out General Secretary, Avril Hall-Callaghan will be retiring and a new era will begin with the appointment of our new General Secretary, Jacquie White. I have been working closely with Jacquie for a number of years and look forward to continuing this relationship and building on the great work that Avril has done over the years. I also look forward to seeing what Jacquie brings for the future.

UTU's Centenary concert was held on 23rd January 2019 in the Ulster Hall. This was indeed a great event and I can be particularly proud that my daughter's school choir, Ballyclare Secondary School, concluded the event and were amazing. The entire event was testament to the hard work done by staff at UTU in its organisation but also showed the talent of pupils and the dedication of the hardworking teachers.

As Field Officer, my role is primarily dealing with queries from members through phone conversations and face to face meetings either in school or at a neutral venue, depending on the needs of the member. As always, the issues raised by members are wide-ranging and include needing advice and information on retirement, parental leave, directed time, flexible working, temporary contracts, general employment rights and many other issues including Union industrial action. I have also been involved in meetings of the NITC and other relevant committees.

Unfortunately, with the long term absence of an Education Minister and the current political stalemate, educational issues continue to be in limbo. This uncertainty gives rise to grave concerns about finding a positive way forward. Teachers seem disillusioned with the employment situation they find themselves in and are approaching the Union for assistance and advice on many levels.

Industrial action has become the norm over the past year. ETI have not changed their position and continue to approach Principals and Governors to arrange inspections. As Field Officer, I have supported members on "Inspection Days" in their school and Union presence has proven to be a great reassurance during what appears to be a stressful situation. However, we have found recently that teachers and indeed UTU Principals are becoming stronger in dealing with the persistent and sometimes intimidating tactics employed by ETI and have been steadfast in their refusal to cooperate. This is encouraging and we are more determined than ever to continue in our efforts to negotiate and secure a solution to the current situation to benefit our members working into the future.

As in previous years I have continued to take advantage of any training opportunities presented to me through staff training days and ICTU courses which are always very useful in terms of updating my skills and knowledge.

I have, along with my colleagues, been involved with recruitment, meeting the year's incoming student teacher body and introducing them to our Union. I have been working closely with UTU's Organising Officer, Rebekka Gilpin, collaborating on several aspects of our work from recruitment to the organisation of the F.I.T. events including Q & A Principal sessions and seminars for students. F.I.T. each year, continues to grow and this is positive in terms of the future of UTU.

I am on the Organisation and Membership Committee, Health and Safety Committee, UTU/INTO Joint Services and ICTU Education and Training Committee.

Our attendance at Union conferences and ICTU events throughout the year is always a positive experience.

My work in the union encourages me to learn all the time and I continue to benefit greatly in every aspect of the job with the help of the General Secretary, the Deputy General Secretary, the Presidents, both past and present, and the other Field Officers and staff who are always willing to share their extensive knowledge and experience with me.

I thoroughly enjoy my work in the Union and it continues to present me with new challenges on a daily basis. I feel being involved in the work of the Union behind the scenes that continually occurs despite the stalemate at a political level will help to ensure that our teachers in Northern Ireland are treated with the respect and value they deserve.

#### **ORGANISING OFFICER REPORT – REBEKKA GIBSON**

Under the motto "Caring for Teachers, Caring for Pupils", the Ulster Teachers' Union represents teachers across Northern Ireland and this year we celebrate the centenary of this special organisation. 2018/2019 has been another year dominated by industrial action due to the continued enormous pressures our schools, principals, teachers and pupils face in the education sector.

As Organising Officer, part of my role is to visit schools across Northern Ireland in order to meet with school reps and members. During these meetings, members ask for information and advice on a vast range of issues, such as Union membership, permanency rights, pay and pensions, redundancy, maternity, behaviour management, and work-related stress.

In light of the Union's continued industrial action over workload, pay and budget cuts, the main concerns raised by our members are around what is clearly deemed to be an unrealistic amount of workload. Furthermore, members regularly ask for reassurance with regard to inspections and time budgets. Whilst some queries can be resolved in phone conversations, others require meetings with staff or individual members.

Alongside my role as Organising Officer, casework has become a major part of my work, ranging in nature from accompanying members to meetings with Principals and HR concerning flexible working, workload, ill health and staff relationships to assisting members with regards to grievances, reasonable adjustments, sickness absences or retirement.

In order to continue and expand the Union's work with recently qualified and student teachers, I have been actively involved in the organisation and running of our annual UTU Future in Teaching Conference in Malone Lodge, which, as always, has been very successful. Furthermore, I have also organised three training events with UTU Principals and students in Stranmillis University College, the University of Ulster in Coleraine, and, for the first time, Queen's University. During these events, students had the opportunity to ask questions and talk to our experienced principals and also learned about their rights and entitlements before they start their teaching careers. Students have fully embraced those events and we will continue to build upon our strong working relationships with the colleges and universities.

Forming an integral part of my professional development, I have attended LRA and ICTU seminars and courses, such as a Diploma for Employment Law course, which have been and continue to be of great benefit for my daily work. These events and courses have also allowed me to establish valuable contacts within the Union network, for which I am very grateful and that I continue to thoroughly embrace.

As in previous years, I would like to thank the General Secretary, the Deputy General Secretary, the President, and all other Field Officers and staff, for their commitment to work as a strong team. Sharing our knowledge and experiences undoubtedly enriches our approach to work for and represent our members in the best way possible.

### 3. Head Office Staff

Our staff at Head Office remained stable this year and members continue to comment very positively on the quality of service they receive at all levels. Many members form great relationships with those with whom they speak on the phone but often do not have the opportunity to meet them in person. The following will provide a little more detail about their respective roles.

**Tony McCabe** provides administrative support for members and Field Officers and is one of the first points of contact for members with a query. He provides I.T. support both in-house and at external events and manages the UTU website and social media channels. He also designs promotional material for UTU events.

**Meriel Segal** is another first port of call for members and also provides administrative support to Officials. She shares redundancy administration duties with Denise (below) and has responsibility for archiving.

**Denise Allely** has been with UTU for the past 26 years. She started as Clerical Officer, progressing to Senior Clerical Officer before coming to her current role of Membership Officer. Her duties in UTU range from maintaining and training staff members on the UTU Database, updating the website, job sharing with Meriel on redundancies and designing and in-house publication of information booklets and flyers.

**Lindsay Osbourne** carries out a range of administrative duties, including organizing the August mailing for School Representatives, and is responsible for making arrangements for events and seminars. She provides support to Tony and Denise in communication with members including email and website and is currently training and providing assistance in the use and maintenance of the database. She shares responsibility for CEC minutes and provides direct and invaluable support to the Deputy General Secretary with a range of administrative and organizational duties.

**Annette Morrow** has responsibility for maintaining the database and ensuring all records are up-to-date. In that role she liaises directly with Teachers' Salaries Department in Waterside House and with Liam Lynch regarding both the current and new databases, and is directly involved in training other members of staff in this area. She is probably the most favoured member of staff amongst visitors to the building as she takes responsibility for in-house hospitality to great acclaim. She ensures that many of the day-to-day practicalities which keep HQ running are

carried out. She also plays a key role in communication with members from dealing with post, to typing up correspondence from Officials, to email correspondence with various groups of members.

**Karen Taylor** is the Executive Officer and has worked for UTU for 37 years. She is in charge of all the administration, including that of Annual Conference, and liaises with potential sponsors and exhibitors. She also ensures that the fabric of the building is serviced and maintained to a high standard. Karen completed her certificate in Occupational Health & Safety and has responsibility for Health & Safety matters in the workplace. She was highly commended by HSENI & NIC ICTU for her contribution to improving workplace health and safety as a UNITE health and safety representative within the UTU. Karen is an integral member of the Property Sub-Committee and the Conference Sub-Committee. Karen runs the day-to-day administrative processes such as monitoring the flexible working practices, and the sick and annual leave schemes. An essential part of management within the Union, Karen is indispensable in ensuring all runs smoothly.

**Heather Arrell** is a qualified accountant and works as UTU's Financial Officer three days a week. She plans a working budget each year for agreement by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and provides excellent support to the Honorary Treasurer, Sandra Brown, in monitoring and managing the Union's finances.

**Lewis Love** and **Leigh Cooper** are our Field Officers in UTU. The work they carry out is varied and wide-ranging and UTU in general, and many members in particular, would like their thanks recorded for the support they provide. Both Field Officers are very involved in casework and start often from first point of contact and carry the case through to its conclusion. Casework can range from issues which impact on wider membership such as redundancies and contractual issues through to situations where individual relationships have broken down. Examples of the issues which arise can be found in Law and Tenure.

Both Field Officers also have their own particular areas of expertise and, alongside their casework, Lewis is involved in work around leadership and pensions with Leigh carrying out roles in recruitment and training. Leigh also represents UTU on the ICTU Health and Safety Committee.

**Rebekka Gilpin** is our Organising Officer and she is a familiar and welcome face in schools and voice on the phone. In recent times, she has been supporting the Field Officers with casework and has also been visiting schools in that role. She takes responsibility for recruitment and has run a number of very well-attended and

successful events with the students in the colleges this year. Rebekka represents UTU on the ICTU Global Solidarity Committee.

**Jacque White** is the Deputy General Secretary of UTU. She is a former primary school teacher who was President of UTU in 2006/7 and joined the staff as a Field Officer a year later. Jacque splits her time between casework representing members and carrying out negotiating in a number of contexts, deputising for the General Secretary where necessary. She currently sits on both the Northern Ireland Committee and the Executive Council of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

**Avril Hall-Callaghan** is the General Secretary of UTU. A former mathematics teacher, she has held her current position for 15 years. She is extremely highly regarded both by other unions and by Management Side, and has chaired both the NITC and the Northern Ireland Committee of ICTU. She has suffered a period of ill-health this year and has been sorely missed at Headquarters. We all wish her a full and speedy recovery.

## 4. Northern Ireland Teachers' Council - (NITC)

The Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) is the Teachers' Side of the Teachers' Negotiating Committee (TNC) in Northern Ireland. It comprises the five recognised teachers' unions – INTO, NAHT, NASUWT, NEU, UTU - who work together to represent the views and concerns of all teachers and school leaders in negotiations with Management Side regarding current issues in education.

The Constitution of the NITC allows a maximum of 5 representatives for every 1000 members or part of 1000 members. UTU qualifies for 5 seats, as do INTO and NASUWT, with NEU holding 2 seats and NAHT 1 with an agreed additional seat for an Observer. NITC aims to work on a consensus basis but, where a vote is taken, there must be four out of the five unions voting in favour.

The NITC Officers were re-elected in September 2018 and are:

- Chair: Avril Hall-Callaghan (UTU)
- Honorary Secretary: Gerry Murphy (INTO)
- Minutes Secretary: Mark Langhammer (NEU)
- Conditions of Service Spokesperson: Gerry Murphy (INTO)
- Salaries Spokesperson: Avril Hall Callaghan (UTU)

The position of Vice-Chair remains vacant.

UTU was represented on the NITC during the year by the President, Carney Cumper, the Vice-President, Susan Thompson, Ex-Presidents David Thompson, Lexie Scott, Gillian Dunlop and Stephen McCord, the General Secretary, Avril Hall-Callaghan, the Deputy General Secretary, Jacquie White, and the Field Officers, Lewis Love and Leigh Cooper.

The full NITC meets every other month from September onwards with NITC Interests (2 per union) meeting at least once in between. This year, however, with on-going negotiations, some meetings were cancelled and replaced with talks; much of the content of the meetings which did take place was also directly related to the talks. The nature and content of the negotiations remain confidential at this stage with members to be supplied with the detail at an appropriate point in the future. The following, however, gives a flavour of the additional issues dealt with at NITC.

### 10th September 2018

Additional items for discussion included:

- Code of Conduct
- EA Parental Complaints Procedure
- EA Policy and Procedure on Cycle to Work Scheme
- PISA

### 8th October 2018 (Interests)

**Transformation Programme:** It was noted that the Transformation Programme had a budget and that some 50 staff were to be seconded to the Programme.

The make-up of the Transformation Programme Board was conservative, peopled by insider civil servants, with little or no educationalist input. CCMS and EA representation was seen as largely functionary, as administrators and deliverers rather than policy makers. The consensus was that the outcome, based on the personnel involved, was likely to be blunt "shrink the system" solutions. A number of workstreams were suggested in the document.

### 12th November 2018

#### EA Contracts:

A meeting was to be arranged to discuss and decide how to progress the issues around the contracts of those support and advisory teachers who were having their contracts changed.

#### Practical Class Sizes:

NITC were informed that progress had been good, and many schools were now backtracking on practical class sizes. NASUWT have been in contact with the Health and Safety Executive which intended to shortly visit schools regarding this issue. A meeting was being set up with DE, EA, ETI and ICTU to establish which 'statutory agency' was responsible for this issue.

A local Grammar School had just been inspected, and it was believed it would fail its inspection due to this issue.

#### E-Safety Strategy:

The new strategy has not yet been written. Indeed, the NAHT had been informed that the current written strategy is two years out of date.

#### Cycle to Work Scheme:

An INTO member who recently purchased a bicycle with a view to getting its cost reimbursed from her employer had been asked by EA to return the bicycle as she

was not their employee, but that of CCMS. It was intended to raise this issue at JWP as it was deemed to be discrimination.

**12th December 2018**

**GTC Leadership issues:** Concern was raised on the potential inter-section between developing Leadership Competencies and the Supporting Effective Teachers capability procedure.

It was agreed that the Secretary invite Sam Gallaher of GTC to a Council meeting, along with Ned Cohen, to address issues around GTC Elections, GTC development generally and GTC involvement in matters of discipline.

**14th January 2019**

**NI Affairs Committee**

There was a report on the hearing with the NI Affairs Committee school funding inquiry. It was noted that the public record of proceedings would soon be available.

**11th February 2019**

In respect of the work of the NITC working group on Anti-Bullying, there was discussion into the repercussions of the NI Assembly's revised definition of bullying within the 2016 legislation.

## 5. Teachers' Negotiating Committee – JWP

Teachers' salaries and conditions of service in Northern Ireland are determined by the Teachers' Negotiating Committee [TNC] which comprises two parties - Management Side and Teachers' Side.

Management Side consists of the Education Authority, CCMS, NICIE, Governing Bodies Association (GBA), Comhairle Na Gaelscolaíochta (CnaG) and the Department of Education (DE).

The Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) is the Teachers' Side of the TNC. NITC consists of the five recognised teachers' unions, UTU, INTO, NEU, NAHT, and NASUWT. Each NITC union has two representatives on the Teachers' Side of the TNC.

The General Secretary, Avril Hall-Callaghan, represents UTU on the Joint Working Party (JWP) of the Teachers' Negotiating Committee (TNC). This year the President, Mrs Carney Cumper, was involved in the work of JWP, as was Jacquie White, Deputy General Secretary, who deputised for the General Secretary when required. The JWP carries out all of the preparatory work in drawing up or revising procedures and the completed documents are ratified by TNC. Working groups comprising representatives of both teachers' side and employers' side are set up as necessary to feed into a range of areas. Their determinations are brought back to JWP for discussion after which they are taken back to the ruling bodies of each union. Final agreement on teachers' side is determined at NITC (Section 4).

During the past year monthly meetings of the Joint Working Party (JWP) have been scheduled. While normally these meetings are primarily focused on the management and progression of agreed agenda items and claims as stated above, most of the time this year has been taken up with the ongoing pay negotiations. Substantive work on a number of issues was carried out by NITC but has not been progressed to a conclusion through the JWP. It was agreed at the JWP meeting of 19th February 2018 that the discussions around pay be formally moved to negotiations.

Outside of the pay negotiations a number of issues came to JWP this year including:

- Investing in the Teacher Workforce scheme
- Recovery of overpayments – This has been fully adopted and the revised procedure is now operational.
- NISTR - There is an agreed proposal whereby substitute teachers employed in a fixed term capacity with an ending date will be able to avail of both holiday and sick pay. This awaits Department of Education approval.
- Minibuses
- EA contracts – Meetings have taken place with EA officials in regard to hybrid contracts, essential car use, permanency delays and SEN allowances in relation to those teachers experiencing change due to the restructuring of EA.
- Parental complaints
- TNC Constitution /Normalisation of negotiating machinery
- Industrial Action/Pay
- Practical Class sizes - This issue arose during the 2017/18 academic year with the publication by DE of guidance which granted licence in schools for extra numbers in practical classes. NITC have agreed a position on this.
- E-Safety
- Code of Conduct - UTU members have been instructed not to sign the document that was delivered to schools pending further consultation.

The Disciplinary Procedure, TNC 2016/2, TNC2016/3, was the last TNC procedure that was ratified before Management Side moved, in Feb 2018, from the stated position of pay 'engagements' to formal pay negotiations. It is now operational in schools. There has also been some progress in regard to practical class sizes, use of minibuses and recovery of overpayments. However, other issues, such as concerns around NISTR, Cycle to Work, THAW, Parental Complaints and Teachers' Pay still remain unresolved; THAW and NISTR have been agreed at JWP but have not yet been ratified by TNC.

Any outcomes from the formal pay negotiations will be put to the wider membership for agreement.

## 6. NITPS Scheme Advisory Board

Responsibility for teachers' pensions is an issue which has been devolved to the government in Northern Ireland. When the transfer of responsibility took place two bodies were set up to deal with the issues pertaining to the scheme, the Board of Trustees of the Teachers' Pension Scheme and the NITPS Advisory Board. The Advisory Board advises on decisions that need to be made to ensure the Teachers' Pension Scheme continues to run within the guidelines laid down by the Government, as advised by the Government Actuary's Department. There are two UTU representatives on the Advisory Board – the General Secretary and the President. The Deputy General Secretary represents the General Secretary as required.

The Advisory Board has met on four occasions this year to ensure that members can be updated on any risks to the scheme and recommend any action that needs to be taken to keep the fund at a safe level to pay out all those who have a call on it. The SAB is chaired by Mr Barry Jordan, DE, and supported by Brian Quinn, DE. The key business of the meetings was as follows:

### TUESDAY 12 JUNE 2018

**Opt Outs:** Brian Quinn summarised the data for members advising that Opt Outs for the period April – May 2018 have remained low, no trends identified. He highlighted for reference the 20-30 Age group, as this was discussed at previous meetings. It was noted that during the period April - May 18, of 35 total opt-outs, 5(14%) are from the 20-30 age group. Breakdown of the 20 -30 opt outs, by amount of service and by reason given below.

By Service -	up to 2 years	5 (100%)
By Reason -	Financial Reasons	1 (20%)
	Not in FT employment	2 (40%)
	No reason given	2 (40%)

**Draft Directions:** Mr Jordan confirmed that Department of Finance had advised that HMT are expected to Publish draft Directions for GB, in June /July, with DoF to follow through with a final draft Direction for NI. The Central Consultancy Working Group (CCWG) had provisionally scheduled a meeting for mid July 18. Draft Directions would be subject to consultation.

Mr Jordan asked members to confirm they were content with the amendments to the Risk Register, namely:

### Risk 2 - Delay in Directions

HMT and DoF had yet to issue Draft Directions; the initial date for completion of the Valuation was March 2018. The risk of a significant delay has been realised.

### Risk 7 - Delay in Regulations

This had been updated to take account to take account of the political situation should the Assembly / Executive remain suspended.

**Contribution Rates:** Brian Quinn confirmed that the Valuation Terms of Reference (ToR) had been updated to include the statutory role of the SAB in the event of a Cost Cap breach. Mr Jordan advised that SAB Members needed to be very clear on the nature of their role, and requested that all members review the draft with any feedback being issued to Mr Quinn.

Mr Jordan noted that in the initial examination of the NITPS Valuation data GAD had noted from the accounting data that the actual employee contribution yield in the scheme was lower than the targeted rate of 9.6%. He informed the meeting that the department would take advice from GAD, and if changes were required to the contribution rates, the department would consult fully with stakeholders. Brian Quinn made reference to the 2 outstanding pieces of legislation which have been delayed as a result of the suspension of the Assembly.

### Premature Retirement Compensation Regulations.

DE was continuing to work with Departmental Solicitors in order to finalise the draft regulations;

### Miscellaneous Amendments to the 1998 and 2014 Regulations, AVC Regulations.

BQ advised that the Department was currently drafting regulations to amend both sets of scheme regulations. The draft would take account of amendments already made by DfE to the TPS (E&W). Both sets of Scheme regulations (1998 and 2014) and the AVC Regulations would also require amendments to take account of the outcome of the Brewster case regarding the need for nomination forms from unmarried partners.

In the continued absence of an Assembly, Mr Jordan advised that DE would consider options for amendments to scheme regulations and report back to SAB.

Brian Quinn provided an update on relevant legal cases as follows:

### **McCloud and Sargeant cases( Judicial and Fire Brigade)**

An employment tribunal had ruled that transitional protections applied in the E&W Judicial Pensions CARE scheme were directly discriminatory on grounds of age, and indirectly discriminatory on gender and race grounds. A similar tribunal on behalf of the Fire Brigades Union came to a contrary ruling, finding that the transitional elements of reform were a proportionate means of meeting a valid policy objective. Both rulings were being appealed and were due to be heard in December. The outcome of the appeals were announced on 29 January. The findings in the judicial Scheme, against MoJ, was upheld. The Fire Brigade case was returned to the initial tribunal for further consideration of proportionality of the approach taken. The appeal was due to be heard 5 November 18.

Brian Quinn noted that these cases are likely to impact on all public service schemes and the SAB would be kept updated on developments following the appeal.

### **Walker v Innospec**

This case covered survivor benefits in the case of a male same sex marriage in England and Wales,(Civil Partnership in NI). With the exception of the NIJPS all NI Public service pension schemes did not apply a restriction at 5 December 2005 when calculating civil partnership entitlements. These are generally payable from the same date of entitlement as for widower benefits i.e. 6 April 1988.

SAB members were briefed on DoF advice on the issue, and BQ confirmed that DE would seek to comply with the Supreme Court ruling should any relevant cases apply, and that this ruling would override any current scheme regulations.

BJ provided an overview of the GDPR Privacy note advising that it had been published on the DE website.

### **TUESDAY 9 OCTOBER 2018**

Mr Jordan advised that opt-out data for the period April-August 2018 had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The data was summarised for members and they were advised that as the number of Opt Outs have remained low, no discernible trends were apparent.

The meeting was advised that Department of Finance had issued draft Valuation

Directions which DE had shared with members. The main area of interest was the proposed change in the SCAPE Discount Rate (Superannuation Contributions Adjusted for Past Experience) from 2.8% to 2.4% from 1 April 2019. This change will result in an increase to the Employer Contribution Rate over and above the cost of rectifying a Cost Cap breach. Mr Jordan added that the proposed changes to the SCAPE discount rate are the responsibility of DoF with the consultation period on the draft amendments running until 19 October to which members could respond. There was some discussion around funding for the consequences of the SCAPE change and Mr Jordan clarified that the funding position was not yet confirmed by DoF/HMT.

Mr Garth Foster, GAD, provided a presentation on the "2016 Valuation Provisional Results and Cost Cap Process" document produced for the SAB. He explained to members the purpose of the Cost Cap mechanism and how the Cost Cap figure is calculated for the scheme and set out the headline results for NITPS which included an employer Cost Cap movement from 13.2% (2012 Valuation) to 8.0% (2016 Valuation) equating to a -5.2% difference. He also set out the results for the Employer Contribution Rate with a movement from 17.7% (2012 Valuation – 25yr spreading) to 25.1% (2016 Valuation – 25yr spreading) after the default Cost Cap rectification. The options for rectification relating to members' benefits which directly affect the Cost Cap were then set out.

Mr Jordan provided an overview of the role of the Scheme Advisory Board when considering the options for rectifying the Cost Cap breach with any proposals taking into account the rectification principles. He said that DE would be carrying out its consultation on the Cost Cap breach through the SAB.

Discussion took place around potential timescales for meeting the HMT deadline of 1 April 2019 for the introducing of rectification measures. Members discussed the options for rectification and it was agreed that GAD would prepare an options costing paper which DE would circulate to members.

Members reviewed the Valuation Risk Register and reported no issues. Mr Jordan asked that members consider further in light of the current cost cap breach.

Mr Foster presented the GAD paper "NITPS – Member Contribution Structure, 2019-2023" and advised that the paper outlined the framework for Member Contribution Rates after 1 April 2019. The paper provided details of the expected contribution yields for the teaching schemes in NI, Scotland, and England & Wales. He further explained that the yield for NI currently meets the 9.6% target, England

& Wales is proposing a change to contribution banding in order to address an under yield, and that Scotland adopted a banding structure in 2015 which differs from that of NI and E&W. GF provided an overview of the current banding structure for each scheme. Mr Jordan suggested that due to the impending issues arising from the Cost Cap breach, a review of the contribution structure could be undertaken in Autumn 2019.

Brian Quinn provided an update on the recent legal cases regarding public service pensions as follows:

#### **McCloud and Sargeant cases (Judicial and Fire Brigade)**

Both rulings had been appealed with the outcome of the appeals to be announced on 29 January 2018. The findings in the Judicial Scheme, against Minister of Justice, were upheld. The Fire Brigade case was returned to the initial tribunal for further consideration of the issue of Proportionality. The Government has lodged appeals in both cases and the appeal is due to be heard on 5 November 2018. It was noted that these cases are likely to have some read across to all public service schemes and the SAB would be kept updated on developments.

Mr Jordan advised that DE is currently considering the treatment of overpayments discovered as a result of the HMRC reconciliation exercise.

#### **5 NOVEMBER 2018**

**2016 Scheme Valuation:** Mr Jordan advised members that a change in the SCAPE Discount Rate (Superannuation Contributions Adjusted for Past Experience) from 2.8% to 2.4% from 1 April 2019 was confirmed in the Government's Autumn Budget statement. He said that the funding position for the consequences of the SCAPE change was not yet confirmed by DoF/HMT and clarified that the funding position was not within the area of responsibility of the SAB. Regarding legislation for changes to the scheme to rectify the Cost Cap, Mr Jordan said that DoF advice was that amending Regulations may proceed on the basis that they are "business as usual", not a change in policy, and are beneficial to scheme members.

**GAD briefing on costing options:** Garth Foster set out the options based on calculations specific to the NITPS, providing approximate values for potential benefit improvements in respect of service in the Career Average Pension Scheme from April 2019. He also provided an overview the rectification principles considered by other schemes. It was confirmed that Equality would be considered as part of impact screening. Members agreed that the following principles should be included:

"To contribute to discharging the Department's Equality Duty under Section 75 of the 1998 Northern Ireland Act in respect of the membership of the NITPS."

Options to rectify the cost cap

Members agreed that the following options were most suitable to be taken forward for consideration:

- **Option 1** – Accrual rate change – (currently 1/57) (new rate 1/47.1)
- **Option 3** – Improving Commutation rate ( currently 1:12) (new rate 1:20)
- **Option 7** – In Service indexation for breaks of 10 years.

Discussion took place regarding implementation of the considered options:

#### **Option 1- Accrual rate change** – (currently 1/57) (new rate 1/47.1)

GF provided an overview of this option conveying that it fully addresses the uplift in benefits needed, and provides best match in terms of delivering to the right people. It is the least complex to implement, and easy to communicate.

Further discussions proceeded on considering a combination of changes including Option 3 & Option 7.

#### **Option 3 Improving Commutation rate** (currently 1:12; new rate 1:20)

GF confirmed that this Option only partially addresses the increase needed, and only benefits relevant service from April 2019. This option would be more complex to administer and communicate.

#### **Option 7- In Service indexation for breaks of 10 years.**

GF confirmed that Option 7 would only partially address the increase needed, as findings were based on E&W only, with comparisons for NI being difficult to extract and difficult to administer. BJ concluded that it would be beneficial to have feedback from the E&W schemes. He also confirmed that DoF would be consulted with regards to the options put forward for consideration, with feedback being made available at the next meeting. BJ concluded by noting the need for Unions to commence engagement with members.

#### **6 DECEMBER 2018**

#### **2016 Valuation Cost Cap rectification note dated 29 November 2018.**

BJ provided members with an update on the Valuation process to date, advising that

following consensus agreement by SAB on viable options 5 November 2018, GAD had provided a paper summarising costs for the three options.

### **GAD briefing on costing options**

The GAD NITPS costing options paper, which set out the options based on calculations specific to the NITPS, providing approximate values for potential benefit improvements in respect of service in the Career Average Pension Scheme from April 2019 for:

1. Existing Scheme- Accrual rate of 1/57 and 12:1 commutation
2. Improved accrual rate- Accrual rate of 1/54.9 and 12:1 commutation.
3. Improved commutation factor- Accrual rate of 1/57 and 16.25:1 commutation.

BJ asked SAB members for their recommendation to him as scheme manager on the preferred option. By consensus agreement Option 1, change in accrual rate, was identified. The rationale for the recommendation was based on the following factors:

- Fully addresses the uplift in benefits needed.
- Provides best match in terms of delivery to the right people.
- Younger members would see greater long-term benefits.

A discussion took place regarding consultation and it was agreed that a briefing paper would meet the initial requirements. It was also agreed that the Department would carry out a 4 week consultation on proposed regulations during Feb-March 2019.

BQ advised that the next steps would be :

- DoF – Seek Accounting Officers approval for rectification option
- DE – Issue Briefing Document to members.
- DE – GAD to certify that the option rectifies the Cost Cap Breach
- DE – Draft Regulations.
- DE – Publishes draft regulations for 4 week consultation period
- DE – Publishes Consultation responses.
- DE – makes and lays regulations.

### **Faster Accrual**

A discussion took place on Faster Accrual. GF provided an overview advising that, as a consequence of assumption changes (primarily the reduction in the SCAPE

discount rate to 2.4% in excess of CPI) resulting from the 2016 valuation, the existing actuarial factors used to determine the cost of each option have needed to be reviewed. It was agreed that GAD would prepare a paper, outlining the options, to be circulated by DE to seek members' preferred option.

### **12 FEBRUARY 2019**

#### **Cost Cap Rectification Update**

BJ advised that as a result of the outcome of the McCloud etc. cases in the Court of Appeal, HM Treasury confirmed in a Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) that schemes should suspend activity on improving scheme benefits in order to address cost cap floor breaches.

On 20 December 2018 the Court of Appeal upheld earlier findings on McCloud etc that the pension schemes had directly discriminated on the grounds of age, and did not accept the Government case that protecting those closest to retirement age was a legitimate policy aim. While the Court of Appeal refused leave to appeal the Government has applied directly to the Supreme Court for permission to appeal. It is expected that the Supreme Court will decide by mid-February whether it will hear an appeal. If an appeal is granted Treasury has requested that the hearing be expedited which would mean it would be heard during the Summer of 2019. Treasury has confirmed that, in the event of the Government winning its appeal, the improved benefits in response to cost cap floor breaches will be brought into effect retrospectively with effect from 1 April 2019.

DE had prepared a Cost Cap Rectification draft briefing paper which set out the Board's recommendation of change to accrual rate as the option to address the cost cap breach. However, taking into account the WMS, finalisation of the paper had been delayed until further instruction was received from HMT. DE would provide the Board with the draft briefing paper.

#### **Faster Accrual Option**

In discussion SAB members confirmed Option 2b (1/46, 1/43, 1/40) as the preferred approach.

#### **Employer Contributions**

BJ advised that the HMT WMS instructed that the part of the valuation which sets the employer contribution rate would continue. It is anticipated that the amended directions will require full increases (17.7% to 25.1%) to employer contributions with effect from 1 April 2019 for changes to the SCAPE discount rate and a correction in

respect of the cost cap breach.

As the rectification element is no longer immediately required the Department can use the powers within both the 1998 Regulations (Regulation G5) and 2014 Regulations (Regulation 192) to change the Employers' Contribution Rate by informing employers by means of a Circular of the change. In order to take this action the Department will need to have a completed valuation report, signed off by GAD. Completion of the valuation report is dependent on DoF making amended Valuation Directions.

In view of the situation DE will issue a briefing paper to employers making them aware of the intended contribution change. This will set out the reason for the change and confirm that the change will be effected by DE Circular. The briefing paper will highlight the dependency on DoF Directions – this could mean that the DE circular might issue after 1 April 2019.

#### **Legal Cases Update – Public Service Pensions**

##### **Walker v Innospec**

BQ advised that further to its consideration of the Supreme Court's ruling, HM Treasury instructed public service schemes in GB to take forward scheme changes to ensure that surviving spouses of single sex marriages and surviving civil partners are treated in the same way as widows of opposite sex marriages for survivor benefit entitlement.

DoF has confirmed that action is required in the NI schemes to ensure compliance with the Supreme Court judgment. Accordingly NITPS will consider on a case by case basis to ensure the judgement is complied with.

The SAB will next meet in June 2019.

## 7. Irish Congress of Trade Unions

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions is the largest civil society organisation on the island of Ireland, representing and campaigning on behalf of some 800,000 working people. There are currently 44 unions affiliated to Congress, north and south of the border.

ICTU has an Executive Committee which meets in Dublin once a month. Patricia King is General Secretary of ICTU and the President is currently Sheila Nunan of INTO. ICTU has a Northern Ireland Committee (NIC/ICTU) which also meets monthly and focuses on Northern Ireland issues. NIC/ICTU is led by the Assistant General Secretary, Owen Reedy, and is currently chaired by Gerry Murphy of INTO. Jacquie White, Deputy General Secretary of UTU, sits on both committees.

ICTU and NIC/ICTU hold conferences in alternate years.

The ICTU Executive meetings have a range of areas of focus each month. Affiliates receive a full report from the Assistant General Secretary on issues faced by unions and their members in Northern Ireland. There are further reports on economic and social policy, industrial and organising issues, administration and the international context including reports on public and private sector issues and industrial disputes. Affiliates offer support and advice where possible and work together on moving forward areas of general concern.

NIC/ICTU, which represents unions which recruit in Northern Ireland, also has a full agenda every month. Reports are given on industrial and pay issues in both the public and private sector and unions update the committee on on-going activity and campaigns. NIC/ICTU has a range of sub-committees which deal with different areas of equality and international relations and information on their work this year can be found in Section 8 of the report.

The key function of NIC/ICTU is to engage with external bodies and political parties to progress the needs of workers. In that regard there have been two main areas of concern for UTU this year.

Firstly, there is the issue of Brexit and the impact it may have on both the public and private sectors in Northern Ireland. The NIC have been engaging on a regular basis with local and national politicians, the Secretary of State, civil servants and others to raise concerns and keep local issues to the forefront of decision making. The

Assistant General Secretary and Chair have also visited Brussels to state the case. The committee receives regular updates on engagement.

UTU is also represented by Jacquie White on the Education Trade Union Group (ETUG). The group has members from all education unions, teaching and non-teaching, and works to progress issues which benefit or cause concern for all staff in schools. With the myriad of issues faced by schools presently the work is wide-ranging but some issues merit particular note.

The Transformation Programme which is taking place in the education sector is of major importance and the unions have been working together to address factors as they arise. Work has been carried out on outdoor activities centres, Special Schools and SEN support. Representatives of ETUG also met recently with Derek Baker, the Permanent Secretary, to be briefed on the programme of work for the future.

ETUG has also issued a survey to establish incidents of assault against members of staff in schools; the survey was issued to all members. The results of the survey are through and a report is presently being compiled. It promises to make startling reading and will be shared with members on completion.

The following members of UTU represented the Union on NIC/ICTU sub-committees during 2017/18:

Women's Committee	Ms J White (Chair) Mrs C Cumper
Health & Safety	Mr L Love Ms L Cooper
Equality	Ms J White Mr S Thompson
Education	Ms A Hall-Callaghan Mrs C Cumper
LGBT	Ms J White Mrs C Cumper
Ethnic Minority	Ms J White Mr D Thompson

Disability	Mrs C Cumper Mrs SE McKee
Global Solidarity	Mrs C Cumper Miss J Orr
Youth Committee	Mr A Shields
Education & Training	Mr D Thompson Ms L Cooper
Culture & Arts	Mrs C Cumper

UTU, both staff and members, also benefits from a range of excellent training courses provided by ICTU throughout the year and continue to support the work of the Better Work, Better Lives Campaign.

## 8. Reports from CEC Sub-Committees

### FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES SUB-COMMITTEE

#### – David Thompson, Ex-President, Convener

The Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee met on a number of occasions to deal with the complexities of our finances. The committee agree the overall budget and expenditure for the year and oversee the income that we receive. The committee also look closely at potential savings that can be made and ensure that the resources of the Union are used in the most efficient way possible.

Throughout the year the committee have been involved in ensuring that ongoing issues are addressed promptly and in a financially appropriate way. The range of issues included upgrading the level of property maintenance, in particular outside, to ensure the high standard of appearance and efficiency were maintained. Replacing the tenants for the top floor of the building and storage at Headquarters were also issues that ensured that this remains a conscientious, hardworking committee.

The Union is continuing to operate within a difficult financial climate and the Sub-committee is requesting an overview of the roles and functions to ensure an understanding of what we, and our members, need is achieved.

I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to Mrs Sandra Brown, Honorary Treasurer, and to Mrs Heather Arrell our Financial Executive Officer for their diligence and professionalism in keeping the Union in as healthy a financial position as possible in the present economically challenging circumstances. I would also like to thank those members who made the journey to Headquarters to attend the meetings on such a regular basis.

### SALARIES AND CONDITIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

#### – Avril Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary, Convener.

No meetings were scheduled.

### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND GLOBAL SOLIDARITY SUB-COMMITTEE

#### – Julie Orr, Convener

The Central Executive Committee of UTU refers relevant items of interest and

concern to The International Relations and Global Solidarity Sub-Committee. Documentation is received on a regular basis from Education International, the world's largest federation of unions, representing thirty million education employees in about four hundred organisations throughout one hundred and seventy countries and territories, across the globe. Education International unites all teachers and education employees, promoting quality education and the interests of teachers and other education employees.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions hosted the 10th Annual Summer School in Belfast at the end of August. The UTU was represented at this conference by Field Officer, Leigh Cooper, Organising Officer, Rebekka Gilpin and Past-President, Julie Orr. The title of the Conference was 'Building our Power – Organising for Global Solidarity'.

In support of 'The Global Campaign for Education', UTU organises an annual competition for schools. This year, the competition was launched in the summer term and this year the theme was 'People who Help and Inspire Us'. Once again there was a fantastic response from schools and pupils across Northern Ireland and we would like to thank everyone who took the time to enter this year.

The UTU also continues to contribute each year to **International Educational Charities**. This year the following charities received donations.

- **World Vision Sponsorship** – sponsoring the continued education of a pupil in Africa.
- **UNESCO - A Ray of Hope** – supporting over 50 initiatives in over 10 countries – including developing educational facilities in India.
- **Disability Aid Abroad** - Disability Aid Abroad is a Northern Ireland charity established to change the lives of people with disabilities living in developing countries. This charity helps support the care and education of disabled young people and runs a wide range of projects across Africa and Asia.
- **Drumglass Parish – Mission work in Kenya** –The development of educational resources in a school in Kenya. Our Ex-President David Thompson and Vice-President, Susan Thompson were part of a mission team delivering resources and support to a Kenyan community last summer.
- **Diane Cusick, Teaching Training, Zambia**– Donations to this charity help support Diane as she continues her worthwhile work, training teachers in Zambia.

- **Hope and a Future** – a Northern Ireland Registered Charity working to provide access to Education for some of Ethiopia's most vulnerable children.
- **Jengana** – a Christian ministry, based in Northern Ireland, that seeks to reach out to children living in very desperate situations in the slums of Nairobi in Kenya. They are currently sponsoring the schooling of many children and are working towards building their own Primary School in Nairobi in the near future.

## EDUCATION AND POLICY SUB-COMMITTEE

### – Stephen McCord, Convener

The Education and Policy Committee have met and discussed the following consultation documents this year.

**May 2018** – Consultation on The Future Provision for Children in the Early Years with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Although the UTU generally agree with many of the proposals in this consultation document there are some areas where we are uncertain or disagree. The adequate funding will be necessary for the training of staff in the early years setting. It is also important that the Education Authority has the capacity and resources available to meet the needs of children when necessary.

**June 2018** – Consultation on The Strategy for Looked After Children: Improving Children's Lives. This was a detailed document and we only responded to sections we feel are relevant to an Education setting with Looked After Children. We support the document but noted that funding will be necessary to ensure that this strategy can have the greatest impact on improving the lives of LAC.

**September 2018** – Evidence called by the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee at Westminster. The committee of MPs want to examine whether the levels of funding allocated to education in the Northern Ireland budget are sufficient to meet the challenges facing the sector, and what the spending priorities should be for the monies allocated to the NI Department of Education. The Education and Policy Committee met jointly with Central Executive Committee to gather information relevant to the NI Affairs Committee. The information was used by Jacqui White to formulate a joint response from UTU, INTO and NEU.

**November 2018** – Consultation on the Guidance on the Model School Complaints Procedure. We responded in detail to this document and hope that our recommendations and suggestions will be taken on board.

**January 2019** – Consultation from The Department for Work and Pensions, The Pension Dashboard. The committee responded positively to this consultation. An online service where teachers would be able to see information regarding pensions, especially if they are entitled to multiple pensions would be of a benefit to teachers. Responses to the consultation documents are available on the UTU website. The Education and Policy committee have representatives across all Education Sectors from each Area Association and I wish to place on record my thanks to all "at-the-chalk-face" who gave up their time to assist in the work of this committee.

## PROPERTY

### – Carney Cumper, President, Convener

Date of meeting: 9th November 2018

Location: Ulster Teachers' Union Headquarters

#### 1. **Trees bordering our neighbour, Mr Hewitt**

CEC had recommended that this sub-committee investigate the issue raised by our neighbour relating to the trees between the properties. Some trees had grown in height and width and were now not only preventing light but also destroying the grass in his garden.

Karen Taylor had asked for quotations from 2 companies to rectify this issue.

The 2 quotations were not only considerably different in amount but also listed different trees that would need to be dealt with. M McClean raised some issues due to the listed nature of the house and grounds. After considerable discussion, it was agreed that Broadleaf Tree Services be engaged to complete the work.

Work began on 28th January and was completed quickly and efficiently.

#### 2. **The top floor of Headquarters**

Karen Taylor met with an estate agent to discuss the leasing of this area. They had subsequently produced a report giving details of what they considered obtainable and some of the facilities which would be available. This was presented to the committee. After further discussion and a site visit to the top floor, a number of

issues became apparent. It was decided to seek a tenant for the space as originally detailed.

It was further suggested that the Union should investigate the possibility of off-site storage for papers currently kept on the top floor.

This was done, however it was agreed that this would entail many difficulties and would not be of benefit at this time.

## CONFERENCE

### – David Thompson, Ex-President, Convener

This committee met regularly throughout the year. Dates of meetings:

- 18th September 2018
- 16th October 2018
- 13th November 2018
- 10th December 2018
- 8th January 2019
- 5th February 2019
- 14th March 2019

When reviewing Conference 2018 the sub-committee noted many strengths and some areas for possible improvement.

#### Strengths:

- Excellent contributions from delegates throughout the conference
- Focused discussion and feedback session on Thursday evening proved very beneficial and worthwhile – it was agreed that a similar workshop should be planned for Conference 2019
- Dungannon Primary School Pupils opened Session 4 with a short drama – this was thoroughly enjoyed by all
- All meals and the service provided by the staff were of an excellent standard
- IT equipment worked very well this year
- Exhibitors were grateful that delegates were encouraged to visit each stand – exhibitors provided a stamp for each delegate. Delegate cards with the correct number of stamps were entered into a draw
- The hotel remains an excellent venue for UTU Conference

#### Areas for Improvement:

- It was agreed that there were too many guest speakers – this should be reduced to a maximum of three speakers
- It is necessary to adhere to the set timetable during future conferences. Late starts meant that some delegates were unable to deliver their resolutions

The President informed the sub-committee that the theme for Conference 2019 would be: Inspiring Teachers: Past, Present & Future. It was agreed that the 100th Centenary logo should be used as part of the backdrop. A photo montage of the first ten and last ten presidents is to be placed on the back page of the delegates' handbook.

Purple Promotions have kindly agreed to sponsor the Area Association Networking session on the Thursday evening. Mr Lexie Scott has been asked to deliver a brief overview of the UTU and the impact it has made during the past 100 years.

Cornmarket and Ulster Farmers' Union have provided full sponsorship. The logos of both organisations will be included on the main backdrop.

A number of individuals were considered to chair Session 4 on Friday. It was agreed that Sam Gallaher, CEO; GTC NI should be formally asked to chair this session.

Fraternal Greetings – The President confirmed that Seamus Searson, General Secretary, SSTA will offer fraternal greetings.

I would like to thank those members who made the journey to Headquarters to attend the meetings on such a regular basis and working hard to plan for our next conference.

## ORGANISATION AND MEMBERSHIP

### – Rebekka Gilpin, Organising Officer

The Organisation and Membership sub-committee has not formally met since Conference 2018 however matters relating to membership have been raised in the monthly CEC meetings.

## **RULES & CONSTITUTION**

– **Avril Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary, Convener**

There were no scheduled meetings for this Committee.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

– **Lewis Love, Convener**

There were no scheduled meetings for this Committee.

## **EDITORIAL PANEL UTU NEWS**

– **Carney, President / Editor**

UTU News continues to be an excellent way for our Union to share important information with our members, as well as providing an opportunity for teachers and schools to showcase some of the excellent work that is taking place in our schools across Northern Ireland. UTU members have continued to contribute interesting and stimulating articles for this publication along with articles of interest provided by various organisations and companies.

The autumn edition of the UTU News was distributed to all members in early November 2018. This edition included a range of topics including an award winning school, the excellent work going on in many of our Nurseries and the fabulous achievements made by girls in local football. However the over-riding theme of this publication was mental health and well-being of both pupils and teachers across the province. We highlighted a range of schemes that are available to both children and adults. Uberheroes, Galgorm Clinic and RISE NI all contributed articles which were not only thought provoking, but a great source of support for our teachers.

This edition also highlighted the participation of UTU members in Union run activities. The President's Cup Golf tournament, The International Relations and Global Solidarity Annual Competition and the Centenary Celebration Heats all featured in this issue.

UTU, as always, would like to extend sincere thanks to Ronnie Haughey for his talent in the design, layout and printing of this publication and for his ability to combine all the articles and advertisements into an attractive and professional publication.

## **REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL BODIES**

### **ICTU WOMEN'S COMMITTEE**

**Jacquie Reid**

The ICTU Women's Committee is an all-Ireland committee with members meeting in each jurisdiction and jointly as appropriate. The present NI Chair is Geraldine Alexander of NIPSA and the committee is serviced by Clare Moore, Equality Officer for NIC/ICTU. UTU was represented this year by Jacquie White, DGS, and Carney Cumper, President.

The biennial Action Plan of the Women's Committee seeks to carry forward policy established at the Women's Conference. The full committee meets on a bi-monthly basis with the intervening time being used by working groups for meetings and related events and activities.

The work-plan for this term has been taken from the motions and the following key issues emerged:

- **Childcare Campaign**

A programme of work has been done here in the past including lobbying ministers, a social media campaign and the establishing of a charter with the main themes highlighted through a leaflet. Congress has also launched their Better Work, Better Lives campaign and one of the policy proposals is around childcare. The Committee built on this work where possible this year but the absence of Ministers has had a serious negative impact.

- \* **Sexual Violence and Abuse**

There has been a lot of work in the past by the Women's Committee and affiliated unions including work on workplace policies and there have been some good policies and guidance provided. The Department of Health and DOJ were also working on guidance this year but with no government in place the launch date is unsure. ICTU were considering including training on this topic in their work programme.

- **Menopause and women's health**

ICTU conducted a survey on this topic and there were almost 2500 responses. The work was picked up by the BBC.

- **Abortion Law Reform**

The report on Abortion as a Workplace Issue, carried out jointly by four of the

affiliated unions, and the results of the survey were launched at the end of 2017 and again on 25th September in Stormont. This has been used widely by a number of organisations.

Patricia King and Frances O'Grady have both written to Theresa May about abortion law in NI to state that this is a human rights issue.

- **Insecure and precarious work**

The Nevin Economic Research Institute (NERI) did some work on this for ICTU. The affiliates are exploring ways of taking this forward.

The RoI Women's Committee hosted the Council of the Isles on the 27th and 28th September 2018. The event took place in the CWU offices in Dublin and was jointly chaired by Margaret Coughlan and Geraldine Alexander. There was an address from Owen Reidy, AGS of ICTU, on the impact of Brexit on women and there were further presentations on the Gender Pay Gap Reporting Legislation, pensions and hidden disability. The NIC/ICTU presentation was on the Abortion as a Workplace Issue report. There was also a visit to the National Parliament to visit an exhibition on Women and Suffrage.

International Women's Day takes place on the 8th March and the Women's Committee marked the event this year by holding its Women's Seminar. The theme was 'Women's Leadership – in trade unions, work and society: challenges and opportunities' and the event was held at the Slieve Donard Hotel, Newcastle on 7th and 8th. There were contributions from a number of women in leadership positions from trade unions and politics including addresses from Patricia King, the General Secretary of ICTU, and Chidi King, the Equality Director of the ITUC. The following workshops also took place:

**1. Women in public and political life – challenges and opportunities.**

Speakers: Claire Hanna, Alison Gilliland.

**2. International Labour Organisation Centenary – what does it mean for women's equality and leadership?**

Speakers: Chidi King.

**3. The Future of Work: the impact of automation and new technologies**

Speakers: Lisa Wilson and Paul Mac Flynn, Nevin Economic Research Institute.

Jacque White, Deputy General Secretary, represented UTU on a panel discussing Women and Leadership.

**NIC ICTU DISABILITY COMMITTEE**

**– Carney Cumper**

This committee meet regularly throughout the year with the focus 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.

The work of the committee is supported by Clare Moore NIC ICTU Equality and Social Policy Officer.

This year's Disability Seminar was held at the Clayton Hotel in Belfast. The agenda was varied and involved a range of speakers from many different backgrounds giving personal and practical support.

The main focus of the workshops and discussions was "Mental Health and the Workplace". Lord Mayor of Belfast, Deirdre Hargey and ICTU AGS Owen Reidy opened the seminar by stressing the importance of this area for Unions and employers. Paul Oakes from the Equality Commission and then Damian Mahon gave an employer's perspective of supporting mental health in the workplace – including the successes and challenges. This was followed by Pat Kenny, CWU and ICTU Health and Safety committee member, and Joe McCuster, UNISON, who gave advice on what unions can do.

A very personal and heart felt reflection from ICTU tutor Barbara Martin inspired and deeply affected everyone in attendance.

Day two opened with Kevin Higgins of Advice NI who gave an input on the impact of welfare reform on people with disabilities. Three lively and interesting workshops concluded the seminar.

UTU is represented on the Disability Committee by Carney Cumper, President, and Sally McKee.

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

## 9. 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.

### MAY 2018

#### **INDUSTRIAL TRIBUNAL – EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The General Secretary reported that a claim for damages arising from a protracted case during which a Principal had been suspended from a school following what later proved to be unsubstantiated complaints of child abuse and the actions of the Board of Governors subsequently was now set to run at the Industrial Tribunal.

#### **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE – EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The General Secretary reported that a teacher who had been suspended from school in November 2017 following allegations of irregularities with collection of school dinner money would be making written representations to the Board of Governors following a Disciplinary Hearing at which the panel had recommended her dismissal.

#### **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

The General Secretary reported that a member who had been absent from school due to an unfortunate incident with her Principal had been called to answer Disciplinary allegations. She has thus far received no written response from the Board of Governors despite attending a Disciplinary Investigation with a panel prior to Christmas.

#### **PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSION**

A member has been on precautionary suspension since March 2017 for allegedly assaulting a child on 2 separate occasions. No further action was taken by PPS. The Field Officer accompanied this member to an investigatory meeting in school concerning these allegations. The member was also informed that further allegations of a similar nature had been made to the school Principal but not to the PSNI and subsequently the member was accompanied to a second investigatory meeting in school concerning the new allegations.

#### **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE – EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

A member was on non-contact duties after a parental complaint /PSNI enquiry concerning an incident in assembly where a child was being disruptive, threw himself on the floor and alleged that the teacher pulled him by the feet out of the hall. A PSNI interview took place in November with a PPS recommendation to follow. This member is currently off school suffering from stress.

#### **EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

A teacher received a visit to school from a PSNI officer several months ago. The officer relayed information regarding a call that had been made to ChildLine during which mention was made of this member. This teacher was working as a substitute at the time. He has been contacted by the PSNI informing him the allegation has been withdrawn and the investigation is closed. This teacher has not been working since in this school.

#### **EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

A member, after returning with her FS class to school after a visit, was informed that one of her children had made his way from her classroom, out of the school and halfway down a main road only to be discovered by a neighbour who took him home. Allegedly the classroom assistant had sent the child to get his coat before the visit, the child had left unnoticed by her or the teacher until their return 50 mins later. The teacher admits not doing a headcount. A disciplinary process has been commenced.

#### **EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Field Officer accompanied a teacher to an investigatory meeting after a complaint regarding harassment was made against her by a classroom assistant. The Governors agreed not to take it to the disciplinary stage but are recommending independent mediation.

**EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Field Officer advised a Principal member who had been having long term issues with the Building Supervisor and cleaners in school. There had been EA involvement and it had been agreed that an informal mediation meeting take place.

**JUNE 2018****EA POST PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Deputy General Secretary reported on a case of bullying and harassment which had been brought against a member. The Disciplinary Authority returned a sanction of a written warning and the appeal is scheduled to take place later this month. The school, in the absence of sufficient Governors, is employing an EA Officer on the Appeals Panel.

**EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Deputy General Secretary reported on a member who is absent from work ostensibly with work-related stress but there are other underlying mental health issues. The Principal, who is also a member, has had to balance a duty of care with confidentiality issues with regard to communicating with OH. The union sought advice which states that the duty of a school is not only to support the teacher but also to ensure that the role they are carrying out does not have a detrimental impact on their health; this outweighs the need for complete confidentiality.

**EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Deputy General Secretary reported on a case where a school, rather than effect a redundancy, moved to reduce the hours of a part-time teacher without consultation or consent. Whilst the situation has been halted, the DGS warned that this is not an isolated incident.

**EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Deputy General Secretary had previously reported on a member who has been prevented from returning to school due to the actions of Governors. She reported that the member is not suspended but has had her pay restored and that EA had now employed an independent party to investigate and report on events.

**EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Field Officer accompanied a member to a PSNI interview regarding a complaint made by a parent in Feb 2017, and followed up by a complaint from the child who allegedly had been dragged down a corridor and threatened by this member. The

child was interviewed by PSNI ,through a video link and the child made further claims that the member had locked him in a room with no windows, denied him access to a toilet, refused him lunch and swore at him. During this interview, the member was accompanied by our solicitor and the Field Officer was able to sit in. CCTV footage was examined and it was evident that the events had not happened in the way the child had described. The member was very clear about the events and the CCTV and witness statements corroborated her story. The PSNI have to make a recommendation to the PPS. The member continues to work in school.

**EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Field Officer is advising a member who has been having long term issues with the Building Supervisor. An informal mediation meeting has taken place involving Union representation for both sides. Agreement on a way forward has been agreed.

**EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Field Officer has taken advice from Shean Dickson Merrick regarding a member whose tax payments had been frozen by human error at the Department resulting in a substantial underpayment in tax over a 2 year period. It seems that she was being asked to pay back twice as her tax code was changed and she also had received a demand from DENI for a repayment of over £4,000, the exact amount of the tax underpayment. The solicitor has written to both HMRC and the Dept. to challenge this.

**SEPTEMBER 2018****EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

It was reported that the Deputy General Secretary has been supporting a member who, on her return to work after recovering from a serious illness, discovered that the Chair of Governors had written to parents and held meetings which resulted in a reconstruction of staffing to replace the member's position of employment. The Deputy General Secretary has held meetings with the Chair and is now in contact with the union solicitor, who has advised that the manner in which the member has been treated may constitute Constructive Dismissal.

**PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSION – EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

It was reported that the Field Officer supported a member who was on precautionary suspension since March 2017 for allegedly assaulting a child on two separate occasions. No further action was taken by PPS and no further disciplinary action was taken by the school. The suspension was lifted in June and the teacher

was due to return to work in September. However, she applied and was accepted on the Investing in the Teaching Workforce scheme and so should be retiring under these terms in 2019. She is currently off sick recovering from surgery.

#### **PARENTAL COMPLAINT – EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

It was reported that the Field Officer supported a member who was on non-contract duties after a parental complaint/PSNI enquiry concerning an incident in assembly where a child was being disruptive, threw himself on the floor and alleged that the teacher pulled him by the feet out of the hall. PPS informed her during her summer break that there was no case to answer and the teacher has resumed her normal duties.

#### **GRIEVANCE CASE – EA NURSERY SCHOOL**

It was reported that the Field Officer supported a member, who has had several allegations made against them. The member was off school due to stress because of the situation since December 2017. The Field Officer reported that the EA and school have been challenged about the lack of due process. The union's Solicitor wrote several strong letters asking for the formal process to be rescinded and recommended mediation be implemented instead. At the end of June, the EA carried out a stress at work risk assessment for this teacher as had been earlier recommended by the OH consultant. The member felt that this was sufficient to allow her return to work and declared this as of 9th July. This caused an issue with EA; however they finally facilitated a return to work, and at the Union's request, gave an alternative role within school as an interim measure until an action plan, as an addition to the risk assessment, was implemented to ensure she felt safeguarded returning to her original role.

#### **DISCIPLINARY**

It was reported that the Field Officer accompanied a teacher to two investigatory meetings and a further disciplinary meeting when it was alleged that she shouted aggressively at a child. The teacher did admit that she had raised her voice but had not acted aggressively. The Field Officer felt during the case that the main issue was that parents and other outside agencies were able to unfairly influence decisions that were made about the teacher. The member was placed on alternative duties outside of school but her main concern was that she had a private visit from Social Services who interviewed her own daughter due to concerns being raised with the Trust. The member was highly stressed after also undergoing several personal issues throughout the past year; however she continued to present for work. In conclusion the member received a written warning and chose not to

proceed with any action regarding redress. The member has since decided to seek employment outside of teaching.

#### **SENCO**

The Field Officer reported that she would be accompanying a SENCO to an investigatory meeting due to allegations made about her treatment of a child in school and also her conduct towards the parents.

#### **ILL-HEALTH RETIREMENT**

The Organising Officer has been attending meetings and supporting a member in the process of applying for ill-health retirement. After appeal, the member was awarded full pension entitlements.

#### **ILL-HEALTH RETIREMENT**

The Organising Officer has been supporting a member whose initial application for ill-health retirement has been refused. The member is currently collecting more medical evidence before appealing the decision.

#### **MEDIATION**

The Organising Officer reported that she had facilitated mediation for two members. The teacher had made allegations of bullying against the VP, but the situation was clarified in the meeting and both members decided to work together and move forward.

#### **FLEXIBLE WORKING APPLICATION**

The Organising Officer has been supporting a member to move a flexible working application forward. The member was subsequently off with work related stress as underlying issues with the Principal have evolved, as well as mental health problems. Flexible working is now in place and the member has seen Occupational Health for reasonable adjustments.

#### **EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Organising Officer has been advising a Principal and the BOG at a school with a permanency issue. The Principal has been acting up for almost 4 years and the Governors would like to avoid a recruitment process due to financial implications should the current Principal not be successful. The Principal will probably have to go through the normal recruitment procedure.

### **PARENTAL COMPLAINT**

The Organising Officer has been supporting a member with regard to a parental complaint. There were difficulties with the BOG, also affecting the Principal, which has left the member off with stress before the summer. The member is now back to work with the Field Officer supporting the Principal in relation to the Board of Governors.

### **PERMANENCY REQUEST**

The Organising Officer prepared and attended an appeal hearing with a member concerning a permanency request. Advice was taken at a meeting with the Union solicitor beforehand.

### **COMPLEX ISSUES DISPUTES**

The Organising Officer has been supporting four members with regard to complex issues at school including lack of trust in management, resignation of all Governors, a proposed amalgamation, outstanding permanency requests and parental complaints.

### **PARENTAL COMPLAINTS**

The Field Officer is supporting a teacher who has four parental complaints made against her. The Field Officer represented the member at a preliminary investigation with a panel of governors.

### **PARENTAL COMPLAINTS**

The Field Officer represented a teacher who felt that Governors did not deal appropriately with parental complaints referred to them by the Principal. This is an on-going case as the teacher is demanding an apology from Governors.

## **OCTOBER 2018**

### **ILL HEALTH RETIREMENT**

The Organising Officer is supplying support for a member whose initial application for ill-health retirement has been refused. The Appeals letter has been sent and the member is awaiting an outcome.

### **PERMANENCY REQUEST**

The Organising Officer prepared and attended an appeal hearing with a member from a Special School concerning a permanency request. Advice was given at a

meeting with the Union solicitor beforehand. The member has lodged with the IT; however, the solicitor has advised to withdraw.

### **EA POST PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Organising Officer represented a member from a post primary school, who has an underlying health condition and requires reasonable adjustments in school. OH has put recommendations in place and the Principal is making adjustments. A further review meeting is scheduled.

### **EA**

The Organising Officer is representing a member from a post-primary school whose application for a job has not been considered due to a fault in the EA email system. EA are currently reviewing the case.

### **EA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Field Officer is advising a Principal who has been having long term issues with the Building Supervisor. An informal mediation meeting has taken place involving Union representation for both sides. Agreement on a way forward has been agreed. This Principal is currently experiencing an issue with a cleaner/ Classroom Assistant in school. An informal mediation meeting was held at the end of June however the cleaner was not willing to take on board the Principal's reassurances about issues she raised and has now raised a formal grievance against the Principal.

### **EA**

The Field Officer has sought legal advice for a permanency issue from a member. This teacher is now in the 6th year of temporary employment in the school but has been denied a request for permanency by EA. EA continually inform UTU that the situation is under review however they seem to not want to progress this. The solicitor has advised that the member can now follow up legally on his right to request permanency.

### **EA POST PRIMARY SCHOOL**

A teacher on a temporary contract in a post primary school experienced an incident with Year 9 boys where she tapped one of them on the shoulder to get his attention to ask him to leave the room. The boy phoned his father who reported the teacher to the PSNI for common assault. The teacher is still in the classroom but has a teaching assistant with her at all times. Our solicitor is now trying to make contact with the investigating officer.

## DECEMBER 2018

### EA PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Field Officer is currently supporting a Principal who has an allegation of bullying lodged by a classroom assistant. The Preliminary Investigation will take place near the end of January.

## JANUARY 2019

### SPECIAL SCHOOL

The Organising Officer is advising a member from a special school who is off with stress. A meeting with the Principal will be scheduled on the member's return.

### EA

The Organising Officer reported, in the context of an ongoing permanency rights case, that the EA are apparently reluctant to honour rights as part of a "new assessment" for sustainability.

## FEBRUARY 2019

### ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

The Field Officer is dealing with a member working in an Educational Guidance Centre who had allegations made against her by a colleague of bullying behaviour. We attended an investigatory meeting where she was informed by EA that they were aware that these allegations were false.

### ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

The Field Officer is dealing with a teacher in an educational guidance centre who has been suspended for an incident where a pupil came outside after break to smoke an e cig. There was an altercation between the pupil and the teacher and there was a struggle. The teacher apologised to the pupil the following day and assumed the matter was resolved. However a colleague made a complaint to management leading to PSNI involvement.

### VOLUNTARY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The Field Officer is dealing with a teacher being disciplined for failure to formally record a child protection matter on the school system. She feels that there were no incidents to record in line with school policy; however she did record in her school diary that she was monitoring a situation. Our concern here is that our member has disclosed a disability and since this she feels she has been targeted. Procedures were not correctly followed in terms of the investigation into allegations against her and she was subjected to questioning from school management about issues to which she feels she acted appropriately. It has proceeded to the formal disciplinary stage.

## 10. UTU Benevolent Fund

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

CEC took the decision this year to provide such assistance to a member who was suffering hardship due to serious illness. The member came to the UTU for employment advice and not practical help, but she was extremely touched and appreciative of the decision taken to help. We wish her well in her recovery.

Since the last Conference a Death Grant has been paid out to the family of the following member of UTU:

### **Miss Emma Patterson, Fivemiletown College**

The Union would wish to place on record their sadness at the loss of a valued UTU member. The President and Deputy General Secretary met with Emma's mother to offer condolences on behalf of UTU.

## 11. A Selection of Other Matters Considered by CEC

The CEC considered a wide range of issues other than those covered elsewhere in this report. The following gives an indication of the type of matters discussed:

- On-going industrial action
- New GDPR regulations and requirements
- Membership database
- Future in Teaching (FIT) group activities
- Student recruitment events
- EA area plan for Special Schools
- Proposed school closures and amalgamations
- NI Affairs Committee inquiry into Education Funding
- Requests from international charities
- UTU Centenary celebrations
- Redundancies
- Chief Inspector's report and surrounding issues

## 12. Teacher Unity

One of the positives which has arisen from the ongoing industrial dispute is the growing feeling of unity between the five recognised teacher unions. There has been an intensive programme of meetings with the Management Side of the Teachers' Negotiating Machinery which have required coordinated responses and that, combined with members supporting each other in their Industrial Action in schools, has built a feeling of unity and cooperation. Those who have represented UTU in the negotiations would wish to extend thanks to our colleagues in our sister unions for their support and solidarity during this process.

In the continued absence of an Assembly and, therefore, an Education Minister, we have been negotiating with representatives from the Employing Authorities and the Department of Education. Both sides of the negotiation have committed significant amounts of time and effort to the process so far which we would seek to recognise. We would like to thank John Collings, EA, for his contribution to the negotiations and wish him well in his retirement.

Our Partnership relationship with the recently formed National Education Union (NEU) in the UK, the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) in Scotland and the Irish National Teachers' Union (INTO) in the Republic of Ireland continues to thrive.

The new amalgamated union, unlike the NUT, has members in Northern Ireland but has made it clear that while it will continue to service its members here it has no desire to take over the membership of either UTU or INTO. It is based in York Street and continues to work in close harmony with both UTU and INTO. We have extended many of our training courses to include NEU members and they now form part of our Joint Board which facilitates closer working and campaigning. As part of this year's work the three unions submitted a joint response to the Education Committee Inquiry into Education Funding. The closer co-operation between the members of all three unions shows that unity can assist all of us.

The relationships with other teachers' unions are also strengthened through further events and in other contexts. The British and Irish Group of Teachers' Unions (BIGTU), the work of which is outlined in Section 14 of this report, enables General Secretaries and Presidents of the teaching unions on both islands to work together and learn from each other; involvement in the Teachers' Union Advisory Committee

(TUAC) to OECD, the Education Committee of the ETUC (ETUCE) and Education International (EI) extends this facility to both a European and global stage.

The Education Trade Union Group (ETUG) of ICTU serves to build relationships with the non-teaching unions in education.

During the year the President, General Secretary and Officials attended the Conferences of the ATL, INTO, EIS, NEU, NASUWT, SSTA, UCU, ASTI, TUI and IFUT. The UTU would like to record its thanks for the wonderful hospitality afforded to UTU representatives who attended the Conferences of our sister organisations during the past year.

## 13. UTU Marketing

UTU continued to work closely with Mandi Millar last year who ensured that the voice of UTU was represented regularly in the media. The President, Carney Cumper, and the Deputy General Secretary, Jacquie White, contributed to debates on both local and national radio stations including Radio Ulster, U105 and Radio 4. We also had excellent coverage in the press, both local and national throughout the year.

The social media aspect of keeping members up-to-date with issues remains very relevant and Mandi ensures that podcasts and short videos are used to that end, particularly in relation to key issues and concerns raised by members at Annual Conference.

Mandi works tirelessly to keep UTU at the forefront of educational debate throughout the year and we would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her continuing support.

## 14. British and Irish Group of Teachers' unions (BIGTU)

A meeting of the General Secretaries of the Teacher Unions in the UK and Ireland takes place once a year to discuss issues which affect teachers throughout the two islands. It is normally the case that a further agenda is planned for a meeting of the wider group which includes the Presidents of the unions in addition to the General Secretaries.

The unions involved are:

Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland (ASTI)  
 Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS)  
 Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT)  
 Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO)  
 National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)  
 National Education Union (NEU)  
 Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association (SSTA)  
 Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI)  
 Ulster Teachers' Union (UTU)  
 University and College Union (UCU)

The General Secretaries keep in regular contact throughout the year by telephone/email as required and also meet up at teaching union, European and international conferences. Sheila Nunan, General Secretary of INTO, is Secretary to the group and a meeting was held at the STUC Offices, Carlow Street, Glasgow, in May 2018.

### 21st May 2018

The ETUCE President, Christine Blower, opened the meeting. She informed colleagues that David Edwards had been appointed to succeed Fred van Leeuwen as General Secretary of Education International (EI). This position is temporary pending the appointment at the World Congress of EI in July 2019. Fred Van Leeuwen is now Emeritus General Secretary EI. This position was approved by the Executive Board of the EI.

She further informed the meeting of EI work in the following areas:

- Constitution and bye-laws

The Executive Board will make recommendations in October 2018 to allow for the inclusion of proposals on the agenda for the 2019 World Congress.

- EI continues to provide solidarity and support for members in prison or sacked in Turkey. The situation remains very difficult for members.
- Good work is continuing in Cypress by EI on cross border north/south initiatives.
- A Conference was held in Italy on standardised testing with representatives of the National Evaluation Service in attendance. There was a very good debate on the issue.
- Israel/Palestine issued a statement on the use of lethal force that resulted in the death of protesters in Gaza. The Chair stated that it is important that the Palestine Unions are contacted to ascertain their views on this issue.

### ETUCE

It was reported that the mid-term Conference would take place in Athens on November 2018. Discussion took place around elections and voting arrangements with colleagues being reminded that ETUCE comprises 45 countries and there is an elected seat per country not per union. It was therefore stressed that country representatives should ensure all unions are informed of work of ETUCE. A discussion took place on the understanding of BIGTU affiliates about the operation of a slate for ETUCE elections and it was agreed that a slate should operate for the next round of elections.

It was stated that it was important that the process was clear and that the positions to be filled by election should be set out for EI World Congress 2019. The meeting was reminded that the Executive Board comprises 1 President, 6 Vice-Presidents and Country seats.

Mike Jennings (IFUT) indicated that he would not be going forward for the 2020 ETUCE elections. It was agreed to circulate a pro-forma in the autumn with possible names from BIGTU affiliates for both the EI and ETUCE cycles of elections.

Larry Flanagan (EIS) reported on the ISTP Lisbon summit stating that it was a useful summit with good participation. The three themes were Schools at the centre of their Communities, Pedagogies for the Future and Teacher Well-being.

Sheila Nunan (INTO) reported on the ARC Conference held in Dublin. It was agreed that it was important to ensure that the teachers' voice is a teachers' union voice at all these conferences and fora.

Rob Copeland (UCU) reported that OECD had increased its resources on higher education. The importance of the pre-meeting for the TUAC meeting was emphasized.

## **REPORTS FROM REGIONS**

### **SCOTLAND**

BIGTU affiliates thanked Seamus Searson of SSTA for sharing his conditions of employment document across the BIGTU group and agreed to update their information.

Larry Flanagan (EIS) reported that 'Teach First' did not succeed in securing a tender in Scotland. On GTC he reported that the Education Bill will be published in June, and updated the meeting on the EIS Pay Campaign.

### **ENGLAND**

Kevin Courtney reported on the NEU picket at the Pearson AGM with colleagues from AFT, UNISON and UCU. This is part of a campaign opposing Pearson funding of Bridge International Academy. This 'for profit' project plans to sell education services throughout Africa and Asia using unqualified staff delivering highly prescribed curricula on iPads. Kevin highlighted concerns over the use of AI in delivering education services.

Joanna de Groob reported on the UCU pension strike where the employer position was reversed. UCU were delighted with the support and solidarity received and on the recruitment of new members as a result of the strike.

### **IRELAND**

Mike Jennings (IFUT) outlined the improvement in gender equality in higher education. All seven universities are now in receipt of the Athena Swan bronze medal.

John MacGabhann (TUI) reported that, in the area of precarious work, dispute resolution machinery is now in place. He further reported on the proposed establishment campaign and the technological universities bill and protections of conditions if secured for members.

Joe Killeen (INTO) reported on ongoing negotiations on new entrant pay and the pay campaign in Northern Ireland.

A further meeting of BIGTU took place in INTO Headquarters in Dublin on 25th February 2019. The meeting was chaired by Mike Jennings, IFUT, and Jacquie White represented UTU. Nominations regarding positions in EI and ETUCE were discussed with a view to upcoming elections. There were further brief updates on regional issues and tribute was paid to Sheila Nunan, General Secretary of INTO, as she moves forward in her career.

## 15. Central Executive Committee (CEC)

### OFFICERS

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mrs S Thompson, Vice-President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex- President

Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary

### HONORARY TREASURER

Ms S Brown

### BELFAST AREA ASSOCIATION

Mrs J Gargan  
Miss J Orr  
Ms L McClure

### NORTH-EASTERN AREA ASSOCIATION

Mrs L Fenton  
Miss H Neely  
Mrs L Creelman  
Mr S McCord

### SOUTHERN AREA ASSOCIATION

Mr S Savage  
Mrs R Johnston  
Mr A Shields  
Mr G Savage  
Mrs G Ward

### WESTERN AREA ASSOCIATION

Mrs P Hurst  
Mrs K Atchinson  
Mrs A Steen

### SOUTH-EASTERN AREA ASSOCIATION

Mrs G Dunlop  
Mrs J Wilson  
Mrs E McKee

### OBSERVERS

Mr A Davidson

## 16. Sub-Committees of the CEC

### **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mrs S Thompson, Vice-President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary  
Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary  
Mrs S Brown, Honorary Treasurer  
Miss J Orr  
Mr S McCord  
Mrs G Dunlop

Convener: Mr D Thompson, Ex-President

### **EDUCATION AND POLICY SUB-COMMITTEE**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mrs S Thompson, Vice-President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Mrs S Brown, Honorary Treasurer  
Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary  
Miss J Orr  
Mr S McCord  
Mrs R Johnston  
Mrs H Neely  
Mr A Shields

Convener: Mr S McCord

### **SALARIES AND CONDITIONS SUB-COMMITTEE**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mrs S Thompson, Vice-President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary  
Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary

Convener: Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary

### **ORGANISATION AND MEMBERSHIP SUB-COMMITTEE**

Ms L Cooper, Field Officer  
Mrs R Gilpin, Organising Officer  
Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mrs S Thompson, Vice-President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Ms S Brown, Honorary Treasurer  
Mr A Shields  
Mrs L Fenton  
Mrs S McKee  
Ms L Taylor  
Ms S Weatherup  
Mrs M Holmes  
Mrs M Nutt

Convener: Mrs R Gilpin, Organising Officer

### **POLITICAL AND EQUALITY SUB-COMMITTEE**

Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary  
Mr L Love, Field Officer  
Ms L McClure  
Mrs J Wilson  
Mr A Shields  
Mr G Savage  
Mr S McCord  
Mr A Davidson  
Mrs M McClure  
Mr M Wright  
Mrs G Burns

Convener: Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mrs S Thompson, Vice-President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Mrs R Gilpin, Organising Officer  
Miss J Orr  
Mrs A Steen  
Mrs P Hurst  
Ms L McClure  
Ms S McNamee  
Miss H Wilson  
Mrs A Orr  
Mrs L Campbell  
Ms H Robinson

Convener: Miss J Orr, Past-President

**CONFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEE**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mrs S Thompson, Vice-President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary  
Mrs S Brown, Honorary Treasurer  
Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary  
Mrs K Taylor, Executive Officer  
Mrs G Dunlop  
Mr S Savage  
Mrs K Atchison  
Mr S McCord  
Mrs E McKee

Convener: Mr D Thompson, Ex-President

**EDITORIAL PANEL – UTU NEWS**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mrs S Thompson, Vice-President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Mrs S Brown, Honorary Treasurer  
Mrs J Wilson

Convener: Mrs C Cumper, President/Editor

**PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mrs S Thompson, Vice-President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary  
Mrs S Brown, Honorary Treasurer  
Mr L Love, Field Officer  
Mrs K Taylor, Executive Officer  
Mr M McClean, Building Trustee

Convener: Mrs C Cumper, President

**RULES AND CONSTITUTION SUB-COMMITTEE**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mrs S Thompson, Vice-President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary  
Mrs S Brown, Honorary Treasurer  
Mr S McCord

Convener: Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary

**HEALTH AND SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE**

Mr L Love, Field Officer  
Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Ms L Cooper, Field Officer  
Mrs R Gilpin, Organising Officer  
Mrs E McKee  
Mr S Savage  
Miss H Neely  
Ms J Johnston  
Mr D Dickson  
Miss A Gault  
Mr C Hannigan  
Mr M McFerran

Convener: Mr L Love, Field Officer

**APPOINTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE**

Mrs C Cumper, President

Mrs S Thompson, Vice-President

Mr D Thompson, Ex-President

Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary

Mrs S Brown, Honorary Treasurer

Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary

Mrs G Dunlop

Convener: Mrs C Cumper, President

## 17. UTU Representation on External Bodies

### **NORTHERN IRELAND TEACHERS' COUNCIL**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mrs S Thompson, Vice-President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary  
Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary

Reserves:-

Mrs S Brown, Honorary Treasurer

### **UTU/INTO JOINT BOARD**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary  
Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary

### **UTU/INTO JOINT SERVICES**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mrs S Thompson, Vice-President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Mrs A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary  
Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary  
Ms L Cooper, Field Officer  
Mrs R Gilpin, Organising Officer

### **ICTU WOMEN'S COMMITTEE**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary

### **ICTU HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Mr L Love, Field Officer  
Ms L Cooper, Field Officer

### **ICTU EQUALITY COMMITTEE**

Mr S Thompson, Vice-President  
Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary

### **ICTU EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Ms Avril Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary

### **ICTU LGBT COMMITTEE**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary

### **ICTU ETHNIC MINORITY COMMITTEE**

Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary

### **ICTU DISABILITY COMMITTEE**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mrs S McKee

### **ICTU GLOBAL SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Miss J Orr, Past President

### **ICTU YOUTH COMMITTEE**

Mr A Shields

### **ICTU EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMITTEE**

Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Ms L Cooper, Field Officer

### **ICTU CULTURE AND ARTS**

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mrs J Wilson

## 18. Hon Vice-Presidents and Trustees

### HONORARY VICE PRESIDENTS

Mrs EH Kerr  
Mrs M Alexander, MBE.  
Mr J Carr  
Mr R Smith  
Mr A Orr  
Mr TGA Scott

### UNION BUILDING TRUSTEES

Ms H Beattie  
Mr M McClean  
Mrs S McKee  
Mr A Orr  
Mr L Love, Field Officer

### PENSION TRUSTEES

Ms A Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary  
Mrs R Barton  
Mr L Scott  
Mrs S McKee  
Mr G McVeigh  
Mr A Orr

### UNION FUND TRUSTEES

Mrs C Cumper, President  
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President  
Mrs S Brown, Honorary Treasurer

## 19. Attendances at Central Executive Committee Meetings

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

### OFFICERS

Mrs C Cumper, President	9
Mrs S Thompson, Vice-President	8
Mr D Thompson, Ex-President	4
Ms AE Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary	2 (2)

### OFFICIAL/CLERICAL STAFF – in attendance

Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary	8
Ms L Cooper	5
Mr L Love	2
Mrs R Gilpin	5
Mr T McCabe	8
Miss L Osborne	3

### HONORARY TREASURER

Mrs S Brown	9
-------------	---

### NORTH-EASTERN AREA

Mrs L Fenton	7
Miss H Neely	4
Mrs L Creelman	6
Mr S McCord	9

### SOUTHERN AREA

Mr S Savage	4
Mr G Savage	5
Mrs G Ward	8
Mrs R Johnston	5
Mr A Shields	8

### WESTERN AREA

Mrs P Hurst	7
Mrs K Atchinson	6
Mrs A Steen	6

### SOUTH-EASTERN AREA

Mrs G Dunlop	3
Mrs J Wilson	6
Mrs E McKee	9

### BELFAST AREA

Mrs J Gargan	7
Miss J Orr	7
Ms L McClure	6

### OBSERVERS

Mr A Davidson	5
---------------	---

## 20. 2018 Conference Resolutions

The Policy developed at Conference 2018 was compiled into a Policy Leaflet and widely distributed to members, prospective members, employers and DE. The Policy Leaflet this year also incorporated outstanding issues from Conference 2017 which were impeded in their progress by the ongoing political situation. The combined document was made available both in hard copy and online.

Reporting back on the progress made regarding resolutions passed at Conference 2018 is somewhat problematic this year as a range of the issues involved are forming part of the ongoing negotiations and therefore cannot at this point be addressed in any depth. Detail will become clear in the event of a proposed resolution to the dispute being put to members.

The situation has been further compounded by both the lack of a functioning Executive, and so no Minister for Education, and the lack of a normalised JWP where such issues would be negotiated directly with the employers.

In that context I will provide in this section of the report an outline of any relevant work to date with further information to follow at the appropriate time.

It can be taken by members that the resolutions from last year in the areas of pay, workload and accountability will be addressed in the context of the negotiations. The issue of inadequate CPD, brought by Larne/Carrick/Abbey Branch and CEC has been raised with the employers where possible but the absence of normalised JWP and the argument of general lack of funding has made this difficult to progress. CPD in terms of SEN, in conjunction with the range of issues raised here by South-Eastern, Causeway and Mid-Ulster Branches, has been raised at the regular meetings with Dr Clare Mangan of CYPS and with other personnel in EA on the back of individual cases. We continue to keep the pressure on.

Progress on Maternity and Paternity Benefits and Class Size continues to be impeded as JWP attention is focused on the general negotiations.

Teacher Health and Wellbeing and Teachers' Mental Health are recognised as being directly connected to the areas under negotiation and will be addressed as the process moves forward.

At the time of writing we await decisions about how the Brexit process will move forward. We will consider this resolution when we have further information.

The South-Eastern Area Association brought the resolution about a no tolerance approach to abuse regarding school staff. Members were invited to take part in the survey regarding assaults and UTU will be moving forward on this in conjunction with the other education unions through ETUG.

The Social Media issue continues to be raised in every available forum and calls have been made to resurrect the work already carried out in this regard. Again, this will be progressed through JWP when it resumes.

School budgets remain fundamental to many discussions. The submissions to and meetings with the Education Committee in the context of their Inquiry kept the profile high and there was a lot of media coverage. The Department of Education and the Employing Authorities are well aware of the difficulties but the absence of a Minister is fundamental.

The issues of lack of school support and recruitment criteria have both been raised directly with EA and it is well aware of the concerns we have here. Again, we require JWP for a more formalised approach.

Area Planning is subject to the same fate. However, we have raised concerns in the appropriate meetings with regard to individual schools and have found that, on this level at least, some decisions have been revisited or delayed at this time. Mid-Antrim Branch called on CEC to investigate the amount of time spent by children on screens. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances at HQ, this work is not yet complete and will be taken forward by the incoming CEC. Apologies to Mid-Antrim Branch for the delay.

As can be seen from reading this part of the report it has been very difficult this year to present to you progress in improving conditions of service. However, we hope that, in the event of a proposed resolution to the industrial dispute being issued, members will then appreciate that many of the fundamental concerns have been central to negotiations.

## 21. Thanks and Appreciation

The President and 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 School Representatives, all of whom play a vital role in the organisation and without whose efforts the union would be unable to operate as well as it does.

The added burden of Industrial Action placed additional onus on all our members and we would like to thank you for the incredible efforts you made to make the action as effective as it has been.

The General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary would like to record their thanks to this year's President, Carney Cumper. She has very quickly become an integral part of the team in Headquarters and will be sorely missed on her return to school. She has faced every new task with enthusiasm and has been an excellent ambassador for UTU this year. Carney's support this year has been greatly appreciated and we wish her every success for the future.

One of the key events this year over which Carney presided was the Centenary Celebration held in January. The event was held in the Ulster Hall and showcased the wealth of talent in music and the performing arts present in our schools. A wonderful evening was experienced by all and the feedback was wonderful. The event was the brainchild of our Ex-President, David Thompson, following his attendance at the Music for Youth event in the Albert Hall hosted by NEU whose advice and assistance were invaluable. We would like to place on record our thanks to David and all members of the organising committee. Particular thanks go to Audrey Stewart, ex-Field Officer, for her adjudication and to Lexie Scott, Honorary Vice-President, for the wonderful work he did on researching and presenting the history of UTU.

Sandra Brown, a Past President of UTU, once again took on the responsibility of the post of Honorary Treasurer, over-seeing the work of the Financial Executive Officer, a qualified accountant. Sandra has been committed and conscientious in her duties facing an ever-increasing set of demands on the resources of the Union at a time when income had reduced due to the disaffiliation of the AEP and the termination of the UCU's lease.

The General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary would also wish to place on record their sincere thanks to the Central Executive Committee for their diligence

when monitoring the progress of the industrial action throughout the year. They were able to reflect accurately the mood of members in their local areas, ensuring that UTU kept up to date with what teachers wanted us to do. The President continued to steer us on a pathway which avoided any negative impact on pupils and parents and worked to ensure that Principals were not alienated from their staff. We can assure all members that we continue to work tirelessly towards a resolution in the interests of all parties.

The President, GS and CEC appreciate the huge amount of work put in by Ronnie Haughey of Province Wide Productions for his assistance in the production of the UTU News. Ronnie helped us to move to a glossy magazine a few years ago and it is now widely read in staff rooms throughout Northern Ireland. Carney edited two editions of the UTU News and despite the harsh financial climate has managed to attract considerable sponsorship.

The CEC and Officials wish to record their thanks to the Union's Solicitors. Shean Dickson Merrick, for the first class services they provide to UTU members. Their expertise in the sphere of Education is second to none and our members feel reassured after they have spoken to Maura, Glenn or any of the other professional staff to whom they have been referred. We would also like to thank the barristers employed through Shean Dickson Merrick who are all experts in their specific fields and who give excellent advice to our members.

The CEC would like to thank Building Trustee, Mervyn McClean, for his continued support and excellent advice to the Property Sub-Committee. He is always on hand when issues arise and continues to provide robust and informed advice on any matters which need to be dealt with to ensure the building is maintained to the highest standard. He liaises with Karen Taylor, Executive Officer, to make sure any work is carried out swiftly and efficiently.

Thanks must also be recorded to Liam Lynch who provides Computer Support on an on-going basis and has ensured that our communication with members is delivered in a timely manner. He also provides day-to-day support to Annette, Denise and Tony when required.

Thanks also to Martin Goodfellow who continues to provide his services in maintaining the grounds of Headquarters to a very high standard. There are a number of other suppliers with whom we have excellent relationships and we thank them all for their assistance in keeping Headquarters running on a day-to-day basis.

Although it has been a difficult year in terms of negotiating, nevertheless we have always found relationships with representatives of the Department of Education and the Employing Authorities on a personal level to be cordial and professional. The CEC would wish to record their thanks to the UTU Officials, Jacquie, Lewis, Leigh and Rebekka and to the members of CEC who contributed their expertise to ensuring that the young people who attended the FIT Conference had a great experience. Many of those who attended the FIT Conference are also delegates to the Annual Conference.

Finally, the General Secretary would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of the Ulster Teachers' Union during the past year. She would particularly like to thank the staff for their dedication and commitment. The membership of UTU has remained steady this year, and much of that can be attributed to the hard work of the CEC, Branch and Area officers and the staff, who always provide members with support when it is required, be that legal advice, counselling or just standing with them when the ETI came into their schools during the Industrial Action.

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