



ULSTER TEACHERS' UNION 103RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE

REPORT OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022

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1. INTRODUCTION



Colleagues

I would like to begin by commending you all for the huge efforts you have made this year to sustain education for the children in your care and to provide the necessary pathways back for both pupils and your teaching colleagues into schools which are still suffering from the impacts of the pandemic. Whilst you may feel that your efforts have not been fully recognised in all quarters, I can assure you that the children, the parents, your colleagues across all of the teaching and non-teaching unions and those of us who present your case in engagements and negotiations have appreciated the work that you have put in over the past year.

We look forward to welcoming you back to our first physical Annual Conference since Covid began. We have all become very proficient at working and engaging within the virtual arena, and it has served to move the work forward, but there is no doubt that the relationships we build, the questions we get answered and the lessons that we learn through face-to-face meetings have taken on a new importance by virtue of the fact that their absence has been imposed on us for so long.

Just as your work continued, first remotely and then back in schools, so the work of UTU followed a similar trajectory. It gives me great pleasure, through the report of the Central Executive Committee Annual Report, to present a flavour of the engagement and negotiation which has been carried out by the elected members of CEC and the UTU Officials on your behalf during the past months. I say 'a flavour' as it proved to be impossible to represent the role played in every piece of Covid guidance, every recovery initiative or every negotiation around workload; the fact that, in the months of January and February this year, 58 meetings of Working Groups addressing the Reviews arising from the Pay and Workload Agreement took place, with that number not including meetings of sub-groups of those Review Groups, gives you some indication of the volume of work covered. Bearing that in mind, if you come across something in the Report around which you would like more information or detail, please feel free to contact your elected members of CEC, our Officials or me directly and that can be accommodated.

I, personally, would like to extend huge thanks and gratitude to the members of the Central Executive Committee for their work and support this year, both to me but, more importantly, in the interests of all of you, the members. They have represented, responded to and negotiated for members in a range of different areas, often at short notice and well outside of working hours. Their commitment to the membership of UTU has been unsurpassed.

I hope you find the Report informative and, again, all on CEC and all at Headquarters look forward to welcoming you to the Slieve Donard Hotel in the coming days.

Warm regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J.E. White". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Jacquie White
General Secretary

2. WORK OF THE UTU

During 2021/22 the Ulster Teachers' Union offered membership to qualified teachers in the Nursery, Primary, Post Primary (including Voluntary Grammar), Preparatory and Special school sectors. 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 are also in membership, and their membership fee depends on their earnings.

In terms of numbers, UTU membership remains steady, and the significant interest in our virtual events and more options to accessing membership through online channels has certainly helped to facilitate this.

A large proportion of members are in the younger age category and consequently, our Future in Teaching (FIT) Group has been at the forefront of liaising with and involving those members. Throughout the pandemic, engagement has been mostly via virtual platforms and younger members have been very engaged in those meetings while also remaining 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. The current Chair of FIT, Ashton Shields sits on our Central Executive Committee and Jillian Jones remains in her role as Vice-Chair.

The impact of the FIT Group continues to be significant, due to the efforts of our Union Officers, Officials and staff who continue to work with, encourage and communicate with students, NQTs and RQTs to ensure the success and growth of this group. Unfortunately the FIT Conference could not take place this year in its usual format due to the Covid19 restrictions but various virtual events are scheduled on a regular basis, for example on the topics of interview techniques and safeguarding. Further virtual engagement on ETI inspections are also on the agenda for this year. Engagement with students through our joint recruitment channels with NEU and INTO took place in person as well as online this year, which gave students a variety of options to engage with the unions.

Training and information sessions also happened in an online forum, and included the very successful programme of financial planning seminars, which continue to attract large numbers. Those seminars are run on a joint basis with INTO, and are provided free through Platinum Financial Services, who will also provide individual advice to UTU and INTO members as a membership benefit.

UTU also facilitated an online forum on Safeguarding, in conjunction with the Education Authority.

In more recent weeks there has been a move back to face-to-face training or School Representatives, which is carried out in partnership with INTO and NEU. The training was very successful and bodes well for future events.

A wider training programme was also made available to all members facilitated by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. Sessions were carried out in conjunction with the Labour Relations Agency and the Health and Safety Executive NI. Topics covered included:

- Maternity/Paternity/Family Rights
- Pregnancy Rights
- Ventilation
- Long Covid
- Mental Health
- Conflict Management
- Public Appointments Process
- NI Protocol
- Dignity at Work

CCEA ENGAGEMENT

The UTU Post-Primary Group continued to have regular virtual engagements with representatives from CCEA this year regarding adapting the examination process to accommodate Covid experience. The engagements were productive from both perspectives as UTU members had the opportunity to feed directly into decisions whilst CCEA gained a greater understanding of the practicalities from the perspective of the practitioners. It was also an opportunity to assess the clarity and levels of dissemination of relevant information. We trust that the relationships developed to date will continue to be of benefit to our post-primary members in the future.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

A UTU School Leadership Forum was held in September around Managing Health and Safety Through Covid 19.

It was hoped that the UTU/INTO/NEU Annual Leadership Conference which normally takes place in January would enable school leaders to once again meet face-to-face. Circumstances did not allow so the event was held virtually and addressed the Taleo system, ventilation and the Review of School Leaders' Workload.

A further physical event has been scheduled to take place in the Glenavon Hotel on 27th April.

2. WORK OF THE UTU

PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE

UTU regularly provides support as follows:

- advice to individual members by phone or email
- regular meetings with school representatives
- UTU Updates
- 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

The face-to-face element of meetings has been impacted but Officials are increasingly being able to meet members again in person.

The majority of queries during the past year have related directly to Covid19 and the issues faced by schools such as staff shortage, track and trace and the management of restrictions and mitigations. Both the Covid situation and the out-workings of the 2020 Pay and Workload Agreement have resulted in intensive engagement with Management Side throughout the past months, a situation which is due to continue as we work together through the reviews, and as business slowly returns to 'normal'.

Procedures being invoked against teachers and principals were suspended for a period of time as personnel, resources – and, indeed, time and energy – were directed towards the management of the pandemic. The processes have now recommenced and Field Officers have all been involved in defending members facing a range of difficult circumstances.

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, Bernie McCloskey and Owen Hutchinson who accompany our members to interviews under caution with the PSNI or advise on available legal redress. UTU members can be assured that they are given the best possible legal advice from local solicitors with many years of specialized 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 advises on potential Industrial Tribunal cases.

The reports of the Field Officers follow:

DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT –

Mr Stephen McCord

It was a privilege to be appointed as Deputy General Secretary and take up post on 1 September 2021. Just like being in the classroom, every day is different at UTU HQ and sometimes the best laid plans can change at a moment's notice! The Covid situation continues to impact our members and there have been many wide and diverse queries regarding the classroom situation, positive cases, inadequate ventilation, and the difficulties around remote learning.

There are many other issues involving members, such as attendance meetings, investigatory and disciplinary meetings, contractual issues and queries regarding maternity, paternity and adoption leave. There have also been many issues regarding poor behaviour in classrooms, members assaulted and sometimes very challenging situations that need remedy in a professional and timely way to avoid impacting on what often is already a very stressful situation.

I have had several zoom webinars for UTU members regarding a variety of issues including time-budgets, SEN and health and well-being concerns. These webinars with the members of schools all prove useful and the use of zoom has proven one positive thing from the past two years. It will, however, be good to get back to visiting members in school, hopefully in the very near future. We have also started to have short, one-page updates, which are tailored for school representatives, and another specifically for our school leaders. The hope is these can be posted out to members as we move out of the pandemic into our more normal way of working. I also liaise with our trusted and valued partners of Cornmarket Insurance, Membership Plus and Platinum Financial Planning Ltd. Very much like being in a union, these three partners benefit our members.

I sit on the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council and deputise for Jackie White on committees and meetings when necessary. I am the UTU representative on several NIC ICTU sub committees, Health and Safety, Education Trade Union Group and Global Solidarity. Through NIC ICTU I have attended several very useful webinars which included working from home, health & safety in the workplace, LRA mental health, pregnancy rights and conflict resolution, to name but a few! I am also taking some trade union professional development by undertaking the ICTU Certificate in Employment Law.

As a member, and secretary, of the Joint Board (INTO, NEU and UTU) we continue to work together for our members with joint training and

2. WORK OF THE UTU

school leader webinars and conference. I have also been involved in School Rep. training and a PGCE event at the University of Ulster.

UTU HQ is very much a team, and it has been great to get back into the HQ and work with each of them Karen planning for conference, Heather on all the financial aspects of the Union, Denise on membership, Meriel and Lindsay on all the many day-to-day queries, emails and forthcoming events, and Tony for all his graphic, social media and website wizzes. I also know I have much to learn regarding TNC documents, trade unionism and tricks of the trade! I must acknowledge the help, support and advice that has been given to me from Leigh, Rebekka, Audrey and Jackie as I step from the classroom into the role of trade union official.

FIELD OFFICER REPORT – Ms Leigh Cooper

We have faced incredible challenges as a staff over the past couple of years due to the Covid 19 pandemic, as have our members who are on the coal face every day. We have returned to office working, albeit on a staggered basis, after being forced to work from home in line with Government guidelines. This has been welcome, however hybrid working has been successful as a method of home working has now been well established due to the crisis situation.

The situation over the past two years has thrown up many problems. As Field Officer, much of the work I am doing is dealing with the usual employment queries but on top of that members have been experiencing added challenges in terms of covid related absences of pupils and staff members resulting in staff shortages, and also coping with their own family circumstances arising due to covid. Many meetings with members have taken place on zoom or Microsoft teams but we are having more face to face meetings as the restrictions are easing, although Zoom has now become common place.

As always, the issues being raised by members include needing advice and information on retirement, parental leave, time budgets and workload, flexible working and general employment rights and many others. But again this year our members are still concerned about their own health and safety and that of the children in their care. The rapidly changing nature of the health crisis with rising case numbers amongst staff and pupils alike, the lack of clear Department guidance and now the absence of a sitting assembly has only served to compound the issues. As Field Officer, I seek to reassure members that, we, at UTU, are constantly ensuring that their voices are heard and we have received very positive feedback regarding our

service throughout this crisis.

This year we were able to attend in person student recruitment fairs and as in previous years we worked in conjunction with INTO and NEU to recruit students from the 4 universities. The application process for this has simplified in that a QR code could be scanned to access the application form.

This proved hugely successful and will continue to be used moving forward. We were able to accommodate 2 final year students from Stranmillis for their alternative placement, and they were able to attend the office in person as well as join many relevant zoom meetings. It was a positive experience and I'm sure an eye opener for the students, learning what happens behind the scenes.

Training for our members took place in various guises this year, we hosted face to face sessions and provided a series of webinars on common workplace issues which are now accessible, online resources for UTU, INTO and NEU.

My work in the union continues to enable me to learn all the time and presents me with different challenges on a daily basis, especially over the last 24 months. I continue to benefit greatly in every aspect of the job with the help of the General Secretary, the President, both past and present and the other field officers and staff who are always willing to share their extensive knowledge and experience with me.

HEAD OFFICE STAFF

Head Office Staff underwent a process of restructuring to respond to the changing nature of society and communications and to ensure that the strengths of all members of staff are being employed to their best in the interests of UTU members.

The following are the revised job titles and roles of the office staff.

Karen Taylor – Executive Officer

Heather Arrell – Finance Officer

Meriel Segal – Support Officer

Denise Allely – Database Administrator

Lindsay Osbourne – General Secretary Personal Assistant and Operational Officer

Tony McCabe – PA to DGS and Communications Officer

2. WORK OF THE UTU

UTU is often acclaimed for the level of service we provide to members and thanks and appreciation must be extended to the office staff for providing a friendly voice, a listening ear and ensuring that members receive the appropriate support as a matter of urgency.

The staff work very much as a team in the interests of members and the positive feedback we receive reflects that. They are the 'backbone' of the office and are greatly appreciated.

Leigh Cooper and **Rebekka Gilpin** are 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.

Rebekka is currently on maternity leave and we extend congratulations to Rebekka and Thomas on the birth of their son, Kaspar.

Audrey Stewart

Audrey stepped into the breach for Rebekka and has been a much valued member of the team this year. As ever, she has been a consistent and comforting voice throughout the pandemic for members and colleagues alike. We continue to enjoy her support and extend thanks and appreciation to her for her work so far.

Stephen McCord

Stephen McCord, Ex-President, was appointed as Deputy General Secretary, effective as of 1st September 2021. He has been an invaluable addition to the team at HQ and has a work ethic second to none! He is well known to many members and has quickly built good working relationships with colleagues in other NITC unions and further afield. Stephen has already shown himself to be a great asset to the work of UTU.

The Deputy General Secretary and Field Officers are very involved in casework and start often from first point of contact and carry the case through to its conclusion. Casework this year has continued to have a huge focus on Covid19-related concerns but has also involved issues which impact on wider membership such as maternity 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.

The DGS and Field Officers also represent UTU on a range of committees and working groups both internally and in the wider arena, the work of which is detailed elsewhere in the report.

Jacquie White is the General Secretary of UTU. It would be remiss of the team at Head Office not to extend thanks and appreciation to our President, Alison Steen. She has been an incredible support this year, particularly with regard to school leader members, and we will miss her practical, level-headed and calm approach. All at UTU HQ wish her well for her upcoming Conference.

3. 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 2019 and are:

- Chair: Gerry Murphy (INTO)
- Vice-Chair: Jackie White (UTU)
- Honorary Secretary: Justin McCamphill (NASUWT)
- Minutes Secretary: Mark Langhammer (NEU)

UTU was represented on the NITC during the year by the President, Alison Steen, the Vice-President, Louise Creelman, the General Secretary, Jackie White, Deputy General Secretary, Stephen McCord, Jon Bleakney, CEC, and CEC Nominee Pauline Hurst.

The full NITC meets every other month from September onwards with NITC Interests (2 per union) meeting at least once in between.

THE WORK OF THE NITC

Negotiations on pay and terms and conditions of service for teachers form the work of the NITC. As Teachers' Side within negotiations, any consultation related to the Teachers' Negotiating Committee is considered and debated here in preparation for engagement with Management Side.

The five UTU representatives are informed by CEC and move the work forward by bringing the UTU position to the table and working closely with our colleagues in the INTO, NASUWT, NEU and NAHT to establish to as great a degree as possible a common approach.

Main areas of focus this year have been the pay negotiations, the reviews which were integral to the Pay and Workload Agreement, Covid issues and the current TNC programme of work. Information on progress in these areas can be found in the TNC Section of the report.

Other issues are brought to the table for consideration as they arise and are subsequently addressed with Management Side/Minister/other bodies through meetings and/or communications.

This year, such issues included:

- Cycle To Work Scheme
- Grievance Procedures for Schools with partially delegated budgets
- Mainstreaming of Shared Education

- Substitute teacher issues
- Transition of Young People into Careers Project
- EOTAS teachers' issues
- Teachers' Side Support Officer post
- The 'pausing' of PRSD
- Additional payment for summer assessment
- Part-Time lecturers employed in schools
- Issues around NISTR
- Period Dignity / Period Poverty process
- TikTok issues
- Menopause sub-group.

CEC are kept fully updated on the work of NITC on a monthly basis.

EXTERNAL BODIES

NITC nominates representatives to engage and consult on on-going issues in a number of areas within the system and report back to the group as a whole.

ETI ENGAGEMENT

Resuming positive engagement with ETI formed part of the Pay and Workload Agreement and, despite the on-going impact of Covid, this engagement has continued in a valuable and constructive manner. The aim of the engagement is to establish a way forward when the inspection process recommences. The engagement is taking place at two levels – the more strategic overview and the practical requirements. Work has been on-going in schools through the District Inspectors to inform system level reports, firstly in Outdoor Play and Reading, and, more recently, with regard to the PE curriculum and the challenges that it has presented for schools both due to the pandemic and more widely. These reports will serve to give inspectors a better insight into the huge impacts experienced and will provide a baseline for moving forward. Whilst the anxiety faced by schools prior to a visit by the District Inspector is highly understandable due to previous experience, members have reported very positive feedback with regard to these visits.

NITC continues to receive assurances that there will be full consultation prior to the inspection process proper recommencing in schools.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

NITC has presented evidence to the Northern Ireland Assembly Education Committee on a number of occasions this year, both formally and informally, on a range of issues including health and safety concerns for schools and teachers arising from the pandemic, Special Schools and Special Educational Needs relating to Covid, the alternative arrangements for post-primary examinations, academic selection under Covid and the functioning of GTCNI. Members can view formal sessions on the NI Assembly website.

EA/NITC Engagement Forum

Whilst not a negotiating forum, EA instigated these meetings to update NITC on the work of EA. More recently, NITC has been much more pro-active in aiming to shape the agenda. The forum meets quarterly and the most recent areas under discussion have been:

3. NORTHERN IRELAND TEACHERS' COUNCIL – (NITC)

- Financial Update
- EA Business Plan
- Education Welfare Service Transformation Project
- EA's Covid-19 Response
- Temporary and Substitute Teachers Supply
- Above Scale Allowances for EA Souldry Scales
- Social Media Abuse (Tik Tok)

A dedicated meeting on inequity around the issue of SEN Allowances took place in January 2022.

Education Safeguarding Forum

The Safeguarding Forum is a recently established body which seeks to bring all parties with a role in Child Protection together to ensure that all lessons learned from key cases are disseminated throughout the system for the good of all children. NITC has two representatives on the forum.

The following are issues which have been under consideration:

- Child Death Overview Panel
- DHR Guidance for Schools
- Case Management Review Recommendations: Paper and Discussion on Key Recommendations/ Learning
- Operation Encompass and Information Sharing Regulations
- Domestic Violence
- Update on Operation Encompass
- NI Executive Consultation on Ending Violence to Woman and Girls.

Child Protection Support Service – Annual Report

Child Protection & Safeguarding Training of Union Representatives

Safeguarding Board of Northern Ireland (SBNI) Learning and Development Plan 2020/2023

Revised 'SBNI Child Safeguarding Learning and Development Strategy 2020-2023'.

Safeguarding training for substitute teachers

EA One

The EA One team focuses on the digitalisation of EA functions such as pay roll and recruitment. Whilst progress has been impeded by the recent Covid crisis, work has recommenced with the on-line recruitment process active and the roll out of pay functions re-established.

Children and Young People's Service (CYPS)

Meetings between NITC representatives and CYPS have resumed and give unions an opportunity to raise the concerns faced by members in the area of SEN support and the terms and conditions of teachers who work in this service.

Issues discussed this year have included:

- EA contracts and the status of employees in Learning Support Classrooms
- The Specialist Setting Support Team, a Multi-Disciplinary Team project
- Specialist provision in mainstream schools
- The Education Welfare Service Transformation Project
- Investment in services and recruitment
- Feedback from SEND Division Staff Engagement Sessions
- The Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)

Members of the post-primary education sub-committee have met with the Interim Chief Executive Margaret Farragher and the team of senior officials on a regular basis. Discussions ranged from the appeals processes, lessons learned from 2021, contingency arrangements for 2022, the optional units, and comparisons of approaches with other jurisdictions. We also had engagement regarding adaptive assessments in literacy and numeracy.

The post-primary members who represent the members are dedicated and passionate teachers with a range of subject specialisms, sectors and positions in school. Their engagement with CCEA around the issues happening on the ground and in real-time means that the teacher voice and student experiences are fed back quickly and appropriately to the examining bodies.

Independent Review of Education

The work of the Independent Review of Education, established as part of the New Decade New Approach agreement, has commenced.

NITC leads met with the IRE Panel in the early stages of their work for early discussion of the issues. Each constituent union was then invited to submit a paper with a view to engaging with the Panel as individual entities in the future.

CEC identified key issues and these were submitted to the Panel in January 2022 with the meeting still to be scheduled.

The work of the Panel will intersect closely with some of the areas covered by the Reviews. A meeting took place between the Review Oversight Group and the IRE Panel in March 2022 to explore the common ground and possible impacts.

4. TEACHERS' NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

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 Chair of TNC rotates between Trade Union Side and Management Side and the Teachers' Negotiating Committee is currently chaired by Gerry Murphy, Northern Secretary of INTO and Chair of NITC.

The General Secretary, Jacquie White, and the President, Mrs Alison Steen, represented UTU on the Teachers' Negotiating Committee (TNC) this year.

The constitution of TNC was reviewed in 2019 with the new constitution forming Circular TNC 2020/2. As a result of the review the Joint Secretaries' Forum was established which comprises three representatives from Teachers' Side and three representatives from Management Side. This group meets between the meetings of the full TNC to establish agenda and monitor work progress. The General Secretary, Jacquie White, represents UTU and NITC on the Joint Secretaries' Forum.

Working groups comprising representatives of both teachers' side and employers' side are set up as necessary to feed into a range of areas contained within the work programme.

Reviews are taking place currently of the suite of policies connected with flexible working, and also of TNC 2008/2 Teacher Attendance Procedure, with the relevant working groups reporting back to JSF. Work has also been taking place on TNC 2009/2 Equal Opportunities Policy for Teachers in Schools and TNC 2009/3 Joint Declaration of Protection. The determinations of the working groups are brought back regularly to JSF 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). When agreement is reached the revisions to the policies will be ratified at TNC and the revised Circulars will be available for schools as part of teachers' terms and conditions of employment.

PAY

The Teachers' Negotiating Committee (TNC) is also the forum for the negotiation of teachers' pay.

NITC submitted a pay claim in June 2021 for a 6% pay uplift plus revisiting of maternity, paternity and assisted pregnancy procedures.

Management Side responded in February 2022 with a pay offer which it claimed represented 3.2% over 2 years, and a commitment to return to the maternity related policies in the future.

The pay offer benefitted newly-qualified teachers, those at UPS3 and School Leaders in the short term by, in effect, restructuring the pay scale, removing the current M1 and adding UPS4, whilst extending the individual leadership pay scales by one point.

Full information on the pay offer was supplied to UTU members and virtual sessions were held to allow for further clarification and questions. UTU further issued a survey to allow members to express their views, the results of which were taken into account by the Central Executive Committee in making their final determination.

UTU, in line with our colleagues in other teaching unions, rejected the pay offer.

At the time of writing, Management Side are considering the position with the commitment to return to the table.

PAY AND WORKLOAD AGREEMENT

In April 2020 an agreement was reached in respect to the pay settlement for 2017-2019. The Agreement, encompassed in the TNC 2020/01 Circular, which involved a pay uplift which members received and a commitment to carry out workload reviews in nine areas.

The Workforce Review Project is coordinated by Mark Bailey, Education Workforce Director and governed by an Oversight Group (a TNC sub-group) comprising five representatives from NITC and five Management representatives. The

4. TEACHERS' NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Oversight Group reviews progress across all reviews, ensures consistency, provides support and determines appropriate points of referral to TNC.

UTU is represented on the Oversight Group by Jacquie White, General Secretary.

The reviews fall into three categories:

TNC-LED: Chaired by Teachers' Side

- Workload Impact on School Leaders
- Workload Agreement 2011
- Initiatives to support THAW

TNC-LED: Chaired by Management Side

- Employment Model
- Consultation Arrangements
- Use of Substitute and Temporary Teachers

DE-LED

- Workload associated with SEN provision
- Accountability Framework
- Statutory Assessment at KS 1-3

Working groups have been established for the majority of the reviews with good UTU representation and work is progressing. Although the groups are operating under boundaries of confidentiality, the Central Executive Committee receives regular updates on progress and considers these on behalf of members.

The Agreement also committed to putting in place some interim arrangements, the out-workings and practicalities of which were addressed through the Transition Group. To date their work has included:

Directed Time Budgets

Support materials and training have been developed and made available and the Transition Group continue to keep them under review as issues arise. Many schools now have DTBs in place. Additional support for individual schools and school leaders has also been provided with a view to every teacher having their directed time budget as soon as possible.

Joint Consultative Committees

These committees have been designed with a view to embedding and improving industrial relations at school level. Twelve schools representing a cross-section of sectors and geographical location have been identified for a pilot scheme and training took place on 10th

March with a view to the pilot commencing after Easter. Following evaluation of the pilot programme, the way forward will be established.

TNC COVID GROUP

The TNC Covid Group comprises representatives from the Department of Education, the Employing Authorities, NITC and the non-teaching education unions represented on ETUG. Its remit has been to consider the current Covid issues in schools and establish a way forward. The work has been frustrating as it has been the view of unions that the concerns raised by members and represented there have not been adequately taken on board and communications issuing to unions for consultation or issuing to schools have had severe timing issues.

Members will be well aware of issues discussed as they have formed the basis for various versions of guidance and/or letters from the Minister. The most recent areas under consideration have included ventilation, shortages of substitute staff, use of student teachers and mitigations which should be maintained in schools to reflect their specific circumstances.

5. REPORTS FROM CEC SUB-COMMITTEES

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES SUB-COMMITTEE – Stephen McCord, Ex-President, Convenor

The Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee are responsible for setting the budget and ensuring the funds of the Union are used effectively. The F&GP sub-committee met on a regular basis on zoom over the past year. With our Annual Conference was moved from a physical setting to a virtual setting for the second year it has meant less expenditure and some savings have been made. We have made some changes to the technology in the building and have installed a mesh wi-fi booster system with access points now throughout HQ. We have also, as part of our continued cycle of updating IT equipment, purchased some new PCs and other hardware and software for staff. We have also upgraded the Server which now has greater capacity. We have able to rent the top floor of HQ from June 2021. The income source of which will be used in property maintenance. The grounds of the property have been refreshed with most of the old and wooden shrubby removed and new bedding shrubs and bulbs are being planted as we go to press. We have continued to have some minor repairs to the building and ground and are indebted to Mr Mervin McClean for his expertise and knowledge in ensuring the costs are kept to a minimum yet to the highest of standards.

I would like to thank Mrs Gillian Dunlop who has diligently carried out her role as Honorary Treasurer for this her third year, and she been re-elected in this role for 2022-2023. She continues to keep a close eye on the Union's finances throughout the year. The Union are fortunate to have Mrs Heather Arrell as our Financial Executive Officer. I would like to thank Heather for her advice and her robust oversight of the finances of the Union. Finally, thanks go to the members of the F&GP sub-committee for their attendance of meetings throughout the past year.

EDUCATION AND POLICY SUB-COMMITTEE - David Thompson, Convenor

The Education and Policy Sub-Committee is comprised of members from CEC and elected members from each of the Area Associations. The members of the committee represent a wide variety of settings, sectors and Key Stages and meet on a regular basis. It is vital that the voice of practitioners from the chalk face can be heard. Occasionally we expand the committee to bring on other UTU members with specialisms and expertise in specific roles.

We responded to a number of consultation documents during the past year. The consultations on Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (Amendment) Regulations 2021 and also to the Deferring School Starting Age. We also had several webinars and engagements for our SEN teachers and SENCOs to enable information and concerns to be gathered from their settings. The post-primary CCEA engagement group have continued to meet this year and have been meeting CCEA officials on a regular

basis. This continues to allow the voice of the KS4 and KS5 teachers to be raised directly with them. I wish to extend thanks to the members of the sub-committee for their time in preparing and reading documents and attending meetings over the past year.

POLITICAL AND EQUALITY SUB-COMMITTEE - Jacquie White, General Secretary, Convenor

Work has returned to normal for the Political and Equality Sub-Committee following the difficulties imposed on the consultation process by the pandemic.

The committee is convened by Jacquie White, General Secretary, and meets as and when required.

The committee has formulated and submitted responses to the following consultations:

- The School Age Bill
- Targeted consultation: Domestic Abuse Information- Sharing with schools, etc. Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022 which included Operation Encompass
- Survey on Domestic Abuse Leave
- Review of EA Equality Scheme
- Education (Curriculum) (CPR and AED) BILL
- Regional Care and Justice Campus proposals
- EA Engagement Framework proposals
- Fair Employment (School Teachers) Bill.

The Convenor extends thanks and appreciation to the members of the committee, and to those co-opted for their expertise, for their work.

Responses to the consultations are available on the UTU website for members' information.

ORGANISATION AND MEMBERSHIP SUB-COMMITTEE – Leigh Cooper, Convenor

The Organisation and Membership Sub-Committee has not met since Conference 2021 due to no further issues arising regarding membership or recruitment. UTU membership has remained constant and is well represented across all sectors and with teachers at various stages of their career.

Obviously it is important that this representation should be maintained and enhanced and online meetings, training sessions and seminars as well as communication via social media and the UTU website is continuing. Due to Covid, student recruitment was carried out online but face to face and in person recruitment events have been returning which should improve student engagement moving forward and is a positive step in continuing future membership of UTU.

SALARIES AND CONDITIONS SUB-COMMITTEE - Jacquie White, General Secretary, Convenor

There were no scheduled meetings for this Committee.

5. REPORTS FROM CEC SUB-COMMITTEES

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND GLOBAL SOLIDARITY SUB-COMMITTEE – Alison Steen, President, Convenor

The purpose of the International Relations and Global Solidarity Sub-Committee is to raise awareness of educational needs throughout the world and organise annual competitions for the children in our schools. It also has responsibility for the research of the current needs of charities both at home and abroad, and the subsequent allocation of UTU funds.

Two Competitions with very high numbers of entries were held throughout the past year. We were delighted that there had been a high number of entries. The first competition was our Annual one, open to all age groups and sectors. It had been a pleasure to judge paintings, postcards and leaflets that all celebrated places that children loved to go in their local area. Children with first prize winning entries from Ballydown PS, Brackenagh West PS and Limavady High School had all had a visit from the President and the winner from McClintock received his voucher in the post. Vouchers and personal handwritten letters from the President were also sent out to second and third prize winners. It was lovely to receive feedback about how delighted the children were to have been selected.

The second UTU competition was one where children were asked to design a Christmas Card with the theme "The wonder of Christmas". The overall prize winner was a pupil at Arvalee Special School, Omagh and this card was used as the UTU official card for 2021. The first prizewinner in every section received a class party bag just before the holidays (and a packet of special Christmas filter coffee was included for their teacher as a thank you for entering!) These were delivered to Arvalee, Irvinestown P.S, Jones Memorial P.S, and Garryduff P.S. Other prize winners got chocolate treats!

At our November committee meeting, we allocated our £3350 charity money over 12 different charities. The charities this year are World Vision, Steve Sinnott Foundation, UNESCO – A Ray of Hope, Jengana (Kenya), PCI Overseas (Nepal and Zambia), Women's Aid, Air Ambulance NI, RNLI, Welcome (Homelessness in Belfast), Water Aid UK, Education International (Haiti Earthquake Appeal) and Newtownabbey Foodbank Appeal.

We trust that the help given by UTU goes some way to helping the great needs that there are in many areas of life, throughout the world.

PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE – Alison Steen, President, Convenor

The purpose of the Property Sub-Committee is to discuss and agree decisions to maintain the structure, furnishings, upkeep and workings of our beautiful building that we are fortunate to call our Headquarters. This committee meets regularly and Mr Mervin McClean attends the meetings in his

capacity as a trustee. The committee are extremely appreciative of his knowledge, insight and expertise and thank him for the many hours he spends in ensuring that our building is safe, secure and maintained in all areas.

The Committee are delighted to report that we have excellent tenants in the upstairs offices – MMI Engineering. Their licence will be renewed in June 2022.

The following list gives an outline of some of the work that has been undertaken and either progressed or happening currently in the 2021-2022 year.

Internal

- Quotations for new carpet throughout the building collated. The successful tender will remove the current flooring and fit the new carpets in April 2022.
- Deep cleaning of all hard floor surfaces.
- Improvements to all toilet cubicles.
- Minor repairs to internal doors.
- Upkeep of boiler – servicing etc.
- Photographs repositioned and Presidential Board mounted.
- Defibrillator installed in kitchen – kindly provided by MMI.

External

- Shrubs removed, new polythene and wooden chips put down, bedding plants.
- Fencing replaced along Cleaver Avenue side.
- Gate posts upgraded.
- Gully traps repaired.
- Pressure washing all areas outside.
- Unblocking downspouts.
- Debris removal from flat roof.

CONFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEE – Stephen McCord, Ex-President, Convenor

The Conference Sub-Committee have met regularly over the past year. Plans for both a virtual and physical conference were put in place following our virtual conference in June 2021. With provisional dates in place we have always taken our direction in the basis of the government and public health advice. With some relaxations to regulations it has always been the aim of the CEC to ensure that if and when a face-to-face conference takes place it does so keeping our delegates, guests and staff as safe as possible. As we go to press the hope is that a full conference will take place in the Slieve Donard, Newcastle on Thursday 31 March and Friday 1 April. Mr Paul Scott was tasked with providing an independent risk assessment and we are indebted to his guidance and advice to the UTU. The number of delegates and guests due to attend also show that there is a confidence in returning to a physical event. We have a range of exhibitors and sponsors and are grateful for their support. A full programme over the Thursday and Friday is planned and is being finalised as we go to press. We are fortunate that Karen Taylor, Executive Officer, arranges and plans for every detail of Conference. Her knowledge and expertise with

5. REPORTS FROM CEC SUB-COMMITTEES

exhibitors and all the finer arrangements are so important in making the two days of Conference a success for our members. I wish to express my thanks to all the members of the conference sub-committee for their input, advice and planning for Conference 2022.

ICT SUB-COMMITTEE – Ashton Shields, Convenor

With a return to headquarters on the horizon, the ICT Sub-Committee was tasked with ensuring our staff had reliable technology and connectivity at hand to cope with increased usage of video conferencing within our unique premises.

A new mesh Wi-Fi system was purchased and is working effectively, allowing multiple staff members and guests to connect without issue. Devices were also refurbished and in some cases upgraded. With the increasing threat of cyber-crime and after much discussion, our data server was upgraded and remains on site at headquarters.

Whilst we hope to welcome members back to headquarters in the not too distant future, plans have been made to allow for improved contribution through the purchase of screens for the board room, allowing casting from mobile devices.

Previously new CEC members were issued with the loan of a tablet for Union business, with mixed results between Apple and Android operating systems a new solution was required. As the majority of CEC members own their own devices, we are considering the costings for CEC members and the use of devices for the future.

A new email system is being trialed amongst staff which will allow committee members a personalised @utu.edu email address. We hope this will help streamline union business and look forward to hearing the outcome of the trial.

Our recently redesigned website is updated regularly however issues with the design company have restricted many changes which our staff have tried to implement, we hope this will be resolved swiftly.

Looking outside of headquarters we reflect on what we learnt during lockdown, participation in training events increased significantly with video conferencing. Allowing for a much greater reach of our members, we aim to continue with remote training events where appropriate and would also encourage those with ideas to bring them forward.

As I bring this report to an end I would like to pay tribute to those who have significantly contributed to all things ICT related this year, Tony McCabe at headquarters for his proactive approach in future-proofing the Union, Stephen McCord who in his new role as Deputy General Secretary brings a wealth of ICT knowledge, Liam Lynch for his IT support and finally, Louise Creelman, our Vice President who

previously chaired the ICT Committee with great commitment for a number of years, thank you.

RULES & CONSTITUTION SUB-COMMITTEE – Jacquie White, General Secretary, Convenor

There were no scheduled meetings for this Committee.

HEALTH AND SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE – Alison Steen, President, Convenor

There were no scheduled meetings for this Committee.

6.

A SELECTION OF OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED BY CEC

- UTU Christmas Card Competition
- Branch/Area Association meetings and issues
- One Million Trees Project
- GDPR
- Charitable donations
- GTCNI
- Residential/school trips
- Safety during Covid for staff at HQ
- Staff welfare
- UTU News
- Communication with members
- Internal protocols for on-line events
- Member benefits and UTU partners
- Internal elections

UTU
ULSTER TEACHERS' UNION

7. LAW AND TENURE

Ongoing casework is reported by the Officials to the Central Executive Committee at each of its monthly meetings. Most of the work is internal to schools but, where required, the Officials are closely advised by the Union Solicitors, Shean, Dickson, Merrick. The Union Solicitors engage the services of barristers on behalf of members, after consultation with the General Secretary.

UTU Officials also take advice from other outside agencies, including the Labour Relations Agency and the Equality Commission, as and when necessary.

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 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 practiced and able team take up the case on their behalf.

Due to the on-going restrictions the Officials continued to work with, and on behalf of, members for most of this year by telephone and remote meetings.

The recent easing of restrictions has meant that some face-to-face meetings have started to be re-established. EA personnel have been phasing out of school support and back into previous, or new, roles and this has enabled some procedures which have had to be paused, and newly emerging procedures, to move back towards normality.

The following reflects some recurring themes with which UTU has dealt this year.

COVID

Schools continue to be heavily impacted by issues relating to Covid and much of the casework carried out by the Officials has arisen from the changing climate.

The high prevalence of cases in schools gave rise to a range of issues with which many schools will be only too familiar. These issues were raised regularly with management but continued to persist for members seeking advice from HQ.

Huge anxiety and stress was caused to members when teaching children after the "track and trace" system was stopped, knowing that siblings were positive or children in the class were "close contacts" but were not considered to be so in the classroom context.

Ventilation and CO2 monitors have caused problems for schools and Officials have worked with EA to address members' needs and concerns.

STAFF ABSENCE

The ability of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, to present in school was hugely impacted by having Covid, having to self-isolate, or simply by having health and well-being issues caused by, or exacerbated by, the on-going situation. The availability of substitute teachers became ever more depleted with school leaders often having to make the decision to partially or fully close the school. The need to provide remote learning when whole classes/schools were impacted was clear but parental expectations for individual circumstances put many teachers under severe pressure.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Substitute teachers have been impacted by the virus just like everyone else but differences in contractual rights and school approaches have meant that contracting/isolating due to the virus led to a lack of access to pay.

SCHOOL LEADERS

School leaders often found themselves having to undertake work well outside of their already wide job descriptions due to lack of staff, a situation not fully understood by management. Even when suffering from the virus, school leaders found themselves running schools remotely rather than getting the opportunity to rest and recover. Taking responsibility for the track and trace system led to overwhelming workload but losing that responsibility simply created a new set of problems. The expectations placed on school leaders during this pandemic both from within and outside school have been crippling and UTU can only commend them for their dedication.

PREGNANT TEACHERS

The majority of schools sought to put measures in place to protect pregnant members of staff throughout the pandemic but some teachers found it problematic to access the required Risk Assessment or the arrangements to work from home from 28 weeks.

TIME BUDGETS

The out-workings of the Pay and Workload Agreement continued to lead to many questions and concerns about time budgets. Some members had never had a time budget before and others sought clarification on the construction and implications of their individual document. Members sought clarification on PPA time, pupil supervision, time set aside for reporting and parent interviews, and time relating to the coordination of subject areas.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Officials have been supporting members through Attendance meetings due to a range of health issues but continue to work with the employers to find a way forward for those teachers experiencing Long Covid.

7. LAW AND TENURE

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS

The return from lock down has seen an impact with regard to pupil behaviour, especially at Foundation stage and members are seeking support in relation to more incidents and a greater range of “needs”.

Pupils are presenting in mainstream with challenging behaviours and teachers are seeking support in terms of the exhaustive measures they are undertaking to access Behaviour Support or Educational Psychology.

ETI

Due to prior experience members have been very wary and anxious when faced with a visit from the District Inspector. Visits have been taking place to inform system-wide reports on Outdoor Play, Reading and PE. Officials have been supporting members through these concerns and have received positive feedback following visits.

PAY AND PENSION QUERIES

Due to GDPR concerns Officials are no longer able to access information on behalf of individual members relating to their pay and pension entitlements. Members report an often unsatisfactory manner in which teacher queries at Teachers' Pay and Pensions are being responded to and Officials work at 'one step removed' to get resolution.

CONTRACTUAL ISSUES

Contractual issues connected with flexible working, job share, pay progression and permanency rights continue to be experienced by too many members. There are particular issues in relation to those teachers who have a variety of contractual conditions which have arisen from working in EA services. A working group is in operation which is seeking resolution to the problems and there has been specific engagement with EA on this issue in recent weeks.

DISABILITY

It is a positive step forward that schools and employers are becoming much more mindful of teachers with disabilities and the need for reasonable adjustments to be put in place. Establishing just exactly what these should be can be difficult but our Officials have been working with a number of schools on behalf of members to ensure that the key factors are in place to support them in their employment and to engage with schools regarding their responsibility in this regard.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

The Area Planning team have returned to their roles and unions have been advised of a number of Development Proposals in recent weeks. Unions are contacted in the early stages of the process and Officials support the members who find themselves in this situation from the outset.

INTERNAL PROCEDURES

Cases which had commenced prior to the pandemic have begun once again to move through the system but progress is slow. Outstanding procedures, including disciplinary issues, grievance cases, bullying and harassment cases and parental complaints have started to move forward and are all the more stressful for members due to the delays and the impact of the pandemic on health and well-being generally. New cases are also coming to the fore. The fact that many meetings and hearings have taken place remotely also strips away that support which comes from having the presence of an Official in the room. This is the case whether members have lodged the procedure themselves or are the subject of a complaint. A return to physical meetings combined with EA personnel returning to previous roles are improving the situation for members.

On behalf of members, we would like to extend sincere thanks and appreciation to our Deputy General Secretary, Stephen McCord and our Field Officers, Leigh Cooper, Rebekka Gilpin and Audrey Stewart, for their time and commitment.

Thanks must also be extended to the President, Alison Steen, who has given excellent support to Principal members this year.

8. NITPS SCHEME ADVISORY BOARD

UTU is represented on the Northern Ireland Teachers' Pension Scheme Advisory Board by the General Secretary, Jacquie White.

Meetings took place on 28th April, 8th June and 12th October 2021, and 8th February 2022

The SAB meetings dealt with the following issues:

OPT-OUT STATISTICS

The scheme is dependent on participation and the numbers of teachers opting out remains low.

CONTRIBUTION RATE

The current contribution rate is set out in the following circular:

CHANGES FROM 01 APRIL 2021 TO SALARY BANDS FOR CONTRIBUTION RATES FOR MEMBERS OF THE NI TEACHERS' PENSION SCHEME (NITPS)

This will be superseded by:

CHANGES FROM 01 APRIL 2022 TO SALARY BANDS FOR CONTRIBUTION RATES FOR MEMBERS OF THE NI TEACHERS' PENSION SCHEME (NITPS), which states the following:

This circular sets out changes from 01 April 2022 to salary bands for contribution rates for members.

- On 01 April 2022, the salary bands applicable to member contributions for the NITPS will change in line with an increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
- The appropriate percentage increase to salary bands from 01 April 2022 is the same percentage as the percentage increase in CPI in the year to September 2021.
- CPI rose by 3.1% in the year to September 2021, therefore, the salary bands for contribution rates for members will increase by 3.1% with effect from 01 April 2022.

These arrangements apply to all members. Member tiered contribution rates for the NITPS from 01 April 2022 are shown below with the previous rates for comparison:

Actual annual pensionable earnings* 01 April 2021- 31 March 2022	Actual annual pensionable earnings* 01 April 2022- 31 March 2023	Member Contribution Rate
Up to £28,309.99	Up to £29,187.99	7.4%
£28,310 to £38,108.99	£29,188 to £39,290.99	8.6%
£38,109 to £45,185.99	£39,291 to £46,586.99	9.6%
£45,186 to £59,885.99	£46,587 to £61,742.99	10.2%
£59,886 to £81,661.99	£61,743 to £84,193.99	11.3%
£81,662 and above	£84,194 and above	11.7%

LEGAL CASES LEADING TO CHANGE

Changes have been taking place over the last few years which will impact on many members at the point of accessing pension benefits. The following is an outline of the journey to date.

As part of the 2015 reforms to the public service pension schemes members who were within 10 years of retirement remained in their legacy pension schemes.

In 2018 in Great Britain legal cases were taken by some members of the firefighters' and judicial schemes (McCloud/Sargeant cases) and the Court of Appeal found that this part of the reforms, which was designed to protect members who were close to retirement, unlawfully discriminated against younger members of those schemes who were not offered the same transitional protection arrangements.

Although the rulings of the Court of Appeal in England and Wales are not directly binding here, legal advice confirmed that all schemes with the same transitional arrangements must be treated as affected by the decisions and so must be remedied.

The remedy would apply to all members who were in service on or before 31 March 2012 and still in service on or after 1 April 2015. This includes active, deferred or pensioner members and those with a qualifying break in service of less than 5 years.

A pension consultation entitled: PUBLIC SERVICE PENSION SCHEMES: CHANGES TO THE TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS TO THE 2015 SCHEMES

Took place and closed in November 2020.

The consultation focused on the following:

- Providing the above members with the option to choose between receiving legacy or reformed scheme benefits in respect of their service during the period 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022.
- Whether this choice would be made immediately or at the point of retirement

The results of the consultation were released in February 2021 and read as follows:

"...the government will proceed with the deferred choice underpin. This approach will mean all eligible members are members of their legacy scheme for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, known as the

8. NITPS SCHEME ADVISORY BOARD

remedy period. Eligible members retiring after implementation will get a choice of whether to take legacy or reformed scheme benefits for the remedy period when their pension benefits become payable. Where affected reformed scheme members retire before implementation, a choice between benefits will be offered as soon as practicable..."

The Teachers' Pay and Pension Team have updated the Quick Guide and FAQs which provide NI Teachers' Pension Scheme members with further information in relation to the Department of Finance consultation on transitional protection arrangements. (McCloud Remedy). The documents are available on the Department of Education website.

UPDATES ON 2016 SCHEME VALUATION

In April 2021 GAD representatives were in attendance at the meeting to provide members of the SAB with information on the 2016 Valuation process.

Members were informed that it was the intention of Government to use the identified shortfall in the employer's contribution, which was supposed to be used to provide additional benefits to scheme members, to address the costs which have arisen from the discriminatory practice identified in the McCloud judgement.

CONSULTATIONS

In June 2021 HM Treasury (HMT) launched two consultations which closed on 19 August 2021. HMT stated that they would welcome input from stakeholders for NI schemes.

The first – the Cost Control Mechanism Consultation - set out the Government's proposed changes to the cost control mechanism in all public sector pension schemes (inc. NITPS) and followed a review by the Government Actuary.

The second was a consultation on the Discount Rate Methodology.

UTU worked alongside INTO and NEU colleagues to submit joint responses as below which can be found on the UTU website.

INTO/NEU/UTU Response to the HM Treasury Public Service Pensions Consultation on the Discount Rate Methodology

INTO/NEU/UTU Response to the HM Treasury Public Service Pensions: Cost Control Mechanism Consultation - Proposal to reform the mechanism

Thanks and appreciation are extended to Nuala O'Donnell of INTO and Alastair Donaghy of NEU for their collaboration on these responses, particularly as it was over the summer months.

The Legislative Consent Motion (LCM) for the Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices (PSP&JO) Bill was debated, on 01 November 2021, in the Assembly. The motion for the LCM was approved by the Assembly, therefore the Northern Ireland clauses for the McCloud remedy will be included in the PSP&JO Bill in Westminster.

On 31 January 2022, the Assembly passed a Legislative Consent Motion (LCM), tabled by the Minister of Finance, to extend to Northern Ireland, proposed amendments to the Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices (PSP&JO) Bill for changes to the employer cost cap for public service pension schemes.

UTU further responded in February 2022 to the following consultation:

Northern Ireland Teachers' Pension Scheme - Prospective Remedy Consultation - Teachers' Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022 and the response is again available on the website for members.

THE PUBLIC SERVICE PENSIONS AND JUDICIAL OFFICES BILL (Public service pensions: proposed changes to the cost cap mechanism for public service pension schemes which introduce a 'reformed scheme only' design and an 'economic check' in line with the recommendations of the Government Actuary) is currently moving through parliament. The Bill makes provision about public service pension schemes, including retrospective provision to rectify unlawful discrimination in the way in which existing schemes were restricted under the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and corresponding Northern Ireland legislation.

Annual Benefit Statements

Issues arose this year with both the timing and accuracy of ABSs which are issued each year to members of the scheme. The technological difficulties have been identified by the Pay and Pensions team and work is taking place to fully rectify the issues as a matter of priority.

III- Health Retirement Guide

Unions were invited to comment on the draft version of the III-Health Retirement Guide. The guide is now available on the Department of Education's website.

9. 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 Kevin Callinan of SIPTU. 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 chaired currently by Alison Millar, former General Secretary of NIPSA.

Jacquie White, General Secretary of UTU, sits on the Northern Ireland Committee. ICTU and NIC/ICTU hold conferences in alternate years. Due to the pandemic the Northern Ireland BDC had been postponed until March of this year but circumstances have since dictated that it will take place in November.

The ICTU Congress took place in October 2021 and was held as a hybrid conference, partly in the Waterfront Hall and partly remotely. Delegations from individual unions had half of their members in the hall and half in other venues; in the case of UTU half of the delegation was in UTU HQ. UTU was represented by Alison Steen, President, Louise Creelman, Vice-President, Leigh McKay, Lynelle Fenton and Pauline Hurst from CEC and Jacquie White, General Secretary.

The General Secretary spoke to the motion on the Fair Employment and Treatment Order in relation to teachers.

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.

As would be expected, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on workers throughout society has been a key element in the discussions, negotiations and representations this year and the impact of Brexit on workers has been a focus as new developments unfold.

The General Secretary of ICTU, Patricia King, also has regular engagement with politicians and others in the Republic of Ireland and NIC is kept informed on issues which may be relevant to Northern Ireland.

UTU is also represented by Jacquie White, General Secretary, and Stephen McCord, Deputy General Secretary, on the ICTU Education Trade Union Group (ETUG). Alison Steen, President, has also been involved in meetings this year. The group has members from all education unions, teaching and non-teaching, who share information and work to progress issues which benefit or cause concern for all staff in schools. It meets bi-monthly and has a wide and varied programme of work. Again, the key feature this year has been the impact of Covid on schools and the committee campaigned vigorously about issues such as ventilation, staff shortages and the wider health and safety concerns around appropriate guidance and mitigations to ensure workforce safety. Maxine Murphy-Higgins (NASUWT) is currently the Chair of the ETUG and Alan Law (UNISON) is Vice-Chair.

The following members of UTU represented the Union on NIC/ICTU sub-committees during 2021/22:

ICTU WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

Mrs A Steen, Ex-President
Ms J White, General Secretary

ICTU HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Mr Stephen McCord, Deputy General Secretary
Mrs L Cooper, Field Officer

ICTU EQUALITY COMMITTEE

Mr S McCord, Deputy General Secretary
Mrs R Gilpin, Field Officer

ICTU EDUCATION TRADE UNION GROUP

Mr Stephen McCord, Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary

ICTU LGBT+ COMMITTEE

Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs L McKay, CEC

ICTU ETHNIC MINORITY COMMITTEE

Mr S McCord, Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary

ICTU DISABILITY COMMITTEE

Mrs S McKee
Mrs P Hurst

9. IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS

ICTU GLOBAL SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

Stephen McCord, Deputy General Secretary
Mrs R Gilpin, Field Officer

UTU, both staff and members, also benefits from a range of excellent training courses provided by ICTU throughout the year. This year many courses were related to the pandemic but have also been reflective of the changing societal circumstances by moving back towards the representation of workers.

ICTU WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

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, GS, and Alison Steen, 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. This year, due to the Covid situation, the meetings took place virtually.

The Women's Conference generally takes place biennially to correspond with International Women's Day, the 8th March. Due to the impact of the pandemic the Conference has been postponed until 29/30 September 2022 and will be attended by the UTU representatives. It was agreed that the current officers of the Women's Committee would stay in their positions until the conference in September 2022.

Whilst the rally for International Women's Day was replaced this year by a static event, celebratory outdoor family activities were still able to proceed in Belfast and there were a range of on-line options to participate throughout the week.

The ICTU Women's Committee held a lunchtime webinar to examine practical ways trade unions can use the convention and how unions are developing policies to support victims of domestic abuse as well as supporting members who have experienced sexual harassment.

The Committee continued to meet remotely and the following represents some of the work covered.

Maxine Murphy-Higgins of NASUWT formed part of a delegation which gave evidence to the Justice Committee on the Justice (Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims) Bill. Areas discussed included removing the victim blaming technology and the area of anonymity, the breaches of anonymity and the repercussions of this for people coming forward. Trafficking, rough sex defence, revenge porn and the impacts of each on women were also discussed.

There are 'get out' clauses, if the legislation is left as is, for example, in the case of up skirting and down blousing the victim has to prove that the motivation is sexual gratification which can be difficult. Concerns were expressed that if the Bill goes through without the amendments, it will not do what it was intended to do.

A number of the committee attended a Domestic and Sexual Violence partnership event which showcased the great work that the Unions have been doing with employers around related policies.

The Committee also discussed:

- Violence against Women and Girls and The Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy consultations
- Gender Pay Gap Regulations
- Equality Commission NI Draft Corporate Plan 2022-25
- Economy Committee evidence on zero-hour legislation

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The ICTU Women's Committee held an on-line event on 7th March to mark International Women's Day. The webinar examined practical ways trade unions can use the ILO Convention 190 and heard how unions were developing policies to support victims of domestic abuse, and supporting members who have experienced sexual harassment.

10. **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.

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

Mr Daniel Irving, Temporary Teacher

The Union would wish to place on record their sadness at the loss of a valued UTU member.



11. TEACHER UNITY

UTU continues to engage in a range of fora with other teaching unions, both across the islands and further afield.

Some of these engagements allow us to ascertain and learn from the high levels of similarity in the issues faced by teachers, regardless of jurisdiction, whilst others provide opportunities to work together on practical campaigns and issues.

Whilst the majority of meetings and conferences took place remotely in the last year, more recent events have allowed for physical gatherings once again.

TEACHING UNION CONFERENCES

The Annual Conferences of sister teaching unions took place remotely for the most part this year due to Covid restrictions. They were highly informative and indicated clearly that teachers throughout the islands were facing circumstances to which we could all relate.

The President, General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary attended the following teaching conferences:

- Irish National Teachers' Organisation
- National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (Northern Ireland and National)
- National Education Union
- Education Institute of Scotland
- Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association
- Teachers' Union of Ireland

JOINT INTO, NEU AND UTU BOARD

The Ulster Teachers' Union, Irish National Teachers' Union and National Education Union continue to forge strong links and work together for members. The UTU is represented by the President, Vice-President, Ex-President, General Secretary. The Joint Board have met on a bi-monthly basis. Issues that that were examined in detail by the Joint Board included:

- Pensions.
- Covid-19 issues in school.
- Student recruitment at University of Ulster (Coleraine), Queen's University (School of Education), Stranmillis College and St. Mary's College.
- School Representative Training.
- Health & Safety Representative Training.
- Webinars on attendance procedure, casual absences, flexible working. These have been recorded and are available to view on the YouTube Channel.
- Leadership Webinar.

BRITISH AND IRISH GROUP OF TEACHING UNIONS (BIGTU)

A meeting of the General Secretaries of the Teacher Unions in the UK and Ireland usually 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/zoom as required and also meet up, outside of Covid restrictions, at teaching union, European and international conferences. John Boyle, General Secretary of INTO, was appointed as Secretary to the group in October 2019.

A meeting of General Secretaries was held remotely on Monday October 18, 2021 with the following issues discussed.

ETUCE (European Trade Union Committee for Education)

It was reported that Education International had carried out work to assist vulnerable teachers in Afghanistan and on ETUCE's representation at the demonstration in Rome on Saturday 16 October, where solidarity was offered from education unions to CGIL (Italian Confederation of Labour) whose headquarters were attacked by arsonists during a protest against "Covid-19 Green Pass".

Positive feedback had been received from the ETUCE virtual conference on the theme of "For an Education-Led Recovery" held on 5-6 July 2021. It was stated that ETUCE would examine how to organise voting more efficiently before any future online events with the mid-term conference likely to be hybrid and held partly in Belgium in mid-July 2022.

COP 26 - CLIMATE CHANGE

It was reported that Larry Flanagan, President of ETUCE, David Edwards, EI General Secretary, (or Haldis Holst Deputy General Secretary) and Kevin Courtney, General Secretary of NEU, would attend the COP 26 - United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow. There would be an opportunity for a physical classroom to be replicated as an events base in order to highlight the Teach for the Planet Campaign. The project on the Sustainable Goals Report Card would be launched there and speakers were being finalised for the mass demonstration at Glasgow Green on 7 November 2021. 100,000 people

11. TEACHER UNITY

were expected to attend. It was agreed that the BIGTU group would issue a press release to draw attention to the pedagogical opportunity presented by the event and in particular to support the realisation of the United Nations' sustainable development goals.

Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC)
BIGTU send representatives to TUAC which normally takes place biannually. The committee was due to meet virtually on 25 and 26 November 2021. Further information on the event is outlined below.

International Summit of the Teaching Profession (ISTP)
The International Summit of the Teaching Profession brings together Ministers of Education and leaders of teachers' unions, outstanding teachers and other education experts and teacher leaders. Ministers for Education must agree to attend in order for the teaching unions from their country to attend. A virtual event, hosted by the USA, was scheduled to take place from 19-21 October 2021. The new Scottish Minister Shirley-Anne Somerville and English Minister Nadhim Zahawi would attend as would the teaching unions NEU and EIS. The Northern Ireland, Welsh and Republic of Ireland Ministers declined their invitations.

The Future of Examinations

Following a discussion updating everyone on the position in different systems including the imminent reports from commissions and Education Departments, it was agreed that a network meeting for education officials within relevant BIGTU unions would be organised. The first scoping out meeting would consider recent developments and focus on the appropriate balance between accredited course work and examinations as well as workload implications stemming from assessment.

Teachers Pay 2021

Each constituent country reported their position as follows:

The public service pay deal in Ireland provided 1% or a minimum of €500 to teachers and lecturers on October 1, 2021, and the same again will be paid on October 1, 2022. The agreement also provided 1% of payroll to each union from 1 February 2022 through a sectoral bargaining process. Education staff in England are subject to a pay pause this year and are campaigning to end this pay freeze. Members in England are inclined to work across borders as the Welsh administration has concluded a pay deal. The increases being paid in the Academies risks undermining confidence in arrangements for the national pay spine. Unions in Northern Ireland lodged a 6% pay claim linked to additional statutory leave. In Scotland the pay dispute continues with further negotiations planned over the next period.

A further meeting of General Secretaries and President is planned for May 2022.

TUAC (Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD)

The virtual meeting of TUAC subsequently took place and was attended by representatives of all of the BIGTU affiliates.

Matters dealt with included:

- OECD Education at Glance 2021- The Outcomes of Educational Institutions and the impact of learning
- Just Transition to a Green Future – impacts on education and skills
- Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic for Vocational Education and Training
- Education Policy Outlook
- Higher Education-OECD Update - The State of Higher Education – One year into the pandemic
- Digital skills for the Future - OECD Skills Outlook 2021; OECD Future of Work
- Early Childhood Education and Care in a Digital World

Further information and papers are available from the General Secretary on request.

ETUCE (European Trade Union Committee for Education)

The ETUCE conference took place remotely on 5 and 6 July and was attended by Alison Steen, President, and Jacque White, General Secretary.

The theme of the conference was "For an Education-Led Recovery" and it dealt with the following motions:

- For an Education-Led Recovery
- Campaigning for a better future for higher education and research
- Artificial Intelligence in the Education Sector
- For a sustainable future of Europe: the role of education trade unions in Europe in addressing education and environment for social change
- Draft ETUCE Action Plan on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Draft ETUCE Action Plan on Organising and Renewal
- The conference was highly informative and thought-provoking.

Related papers are available from the General Secretary on request.

12. UTU PARTNERS

Mandi Millar

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, Alison Steen, and the General Secretary, Jacquie White, contributed to debates on both local and national radio stations including Radio Ulster, Radio Foyle, Q105 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.

Cornmarket Insurance Service

UTU members benefit from our long standing and close relationship with Cornmarket. As an official insurance provider, they offer members great value car, home, motorbike, GAP, pet, travel and temporary car insurance that comes with a range of benefits that are tailored to you the member. Over the past year Cornmarket have provided two exclusive competitions for members in a draw for a luxury Fortnum & Mason Christmas Hamper and a Ring 3 Doorbell.

Platinum Financial Planning Ltd.

Platinum Financial Planning has been working with UTU members for many years. They have extensive experience in advising our members in relation to all aspects of their financial planning needs. Their expertise on the teacher pension scheme is second to none. Over the past year we have worked together with INTO in providing webinars for pre-retirement and for members in mid-career.

Membership Plus

The Membership Plus cards are an excellent perk for UTU members. The cards were last distributed to members in August 2020 and will be renewed again this summer. UTU members can use the plastic card or the electronic app to avail of savings across a range of 1,500 venues. We continue to work in partnership with Membership Plus and it is pleasing to see an increase in members registering and using the card on a regular basis.

ULSTER TEACHERS' UNION

13. CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OFFICERS

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex- President
Ms J White, General Secretary

HONORARY TREASURER

Mrs G Dunlop

BELFAST AREA ASSOCIATION

Mrs N Billington
Mr J Bleakney
Mrs J Brown

NORTH-EASTERN AREA ASSOCIATION

Mrs L Fenton
Mrs E Loughridge
Mr M Creelman
Mrs L McKay

SOUTHERN AREA ASSOCIATION

Mrs A Sawyers
Mr D Thompson
Mr A Shields
Mrs J Ravey
Miss H Wilson

WESTERN AREA ASSOCIATION

Mrs A Dempsey
Mrs J Carrothers
Mrs J Mullan

SOUTH-EASTERN AREA ASSOCIATION

Mr A Davis
Mrs H Milligan
Mrs E McKee

OBSERVERS

Miss J Jones



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

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs G Dunlop, Honorary Treasurer
Mrs A Dempsey
Mr D Thompson
Mrs E McKee
Mrs L Fenton

Convenor: Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary

EDUCATION AND POLICY

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs G Dunlop, Honorary Treasurer
Mrs J Mullan
Mr J Bleakney
Mrs N Billington
Mr D Thompson
Mr A Davis
Mrs E Loughridge
Mr A Orr
Mrs G Ward
Mrs L Campbell

Convenor: Mr D Thompson

SALARIES AND CONDITIONS

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs G Dunlop, Honorary Treasurer

Convenor: Ms J White, General Secretary

POLITICAL AND EQUALITY

Ms J White, Deputy General Secretary
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Mr A Shields
Mrs E McKee
Mrs E Loughridge
Ms S Brown
Mr M Wright
Mr G Savage
Mr C McKendry

Convenor: Ms J White, General Secretary

ORGANISATION AND MEMBERSHIP

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs G Dunlop, Honorary Treasurer
Ms L Cooper, Field Officer
Mrs R Gilpin, Field Officer
Mrs A Dempsey
Mr J Bleakney
Mrs A Sawyers
Mrs H Milligan
Mrs L McKay
Mrs S Brown
Mrs J Gargan
Mrs S Savage
Mr S Cumper
Mrs L Fenton
Mr A Shields

Convenor: Ms L Cooper, Organising Officer

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs G Dunlop, Honorary Treasurer
Mrs R Gilpin, Field Officer
Mrs J Carrothers
Mr J Bleakney
Miss H Wilson
Mrs H Milligan
Mrs L Fenton
Mrs A Orr
Mrs J Brown
Mrs K Moore
Mrs C Price
Mrs S McNamee

Convenor: Mrs A Steen, President

CONFERENCE

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs G Dunlop, Honorary Treasurer
Mrs K Taylor, Executive Officer
Mrs J Mullan
Mrs B Billington
Mrs J Ravey
Mr A Davis
Mr M Creelman

Convenor: Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary

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

EDITORIAL PANEL – UTU NEWS

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs G Dunlop, Honorary Treasurer
Mrs L McKay
Mrs A Sawyers

Convenor: Mrs A Steen, President/Editor

PROPERTY

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs G Dunlop, Honorary Treasurer
Mrs K Taylor, Executive Officer
Mrs H Arrell, Financial Executive Officer
Mr M McClean, Building Trustee
Mrs J Mullan
Mr D Thompson
Mrs E McKee
Mrs L McKay

Convenor: Mrs A Steen, President

RULES AND CONSTITUTION

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs G Dunlop, Honorary Treasurer

Convenor: Ms J White, General Secretary

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs L Cooper, Field Officer
Mrs R Gilpin, Field Officer
Mrs J Carrothers
Mrs N Billington
Miss H Wilson
Mrs E McKee
Mr M Creelman
Mrs K Atchison
Mr J Trimble
Ms S Harrison
Mr B Bovis
Ms J Johnston

Convenor: Mrs A Steen, President

APPOINTMENTS

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs G Dunlop, Honorary Treasurer
Mrs A Dempsey
Mr J Bleakney
Mr D Thompson
Mr M Creelman
Mrs H Milligan

Convenor: Mrs A Steen, President

ICT

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Mr T McCabe, Communications Officer
Mr A Shields
Mr A Davis
Mrs L McKay
Mrs N Billington

Convenor: Mr A Shields

15. UTU REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL BODIES

NORTHERN IRELAND TEACHERS' COUNCIL

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs L Fenton
Mr J Bleakney
Mr A Davis
Mrs L McKay

UTU/INTO/NEU JOINT SERVICES

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs G Dunlop, Honorary Treasurer
Ms L Cooper, Field Officer
Mrs R Gilpin, Field Officer

ICTU WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

Mrs A Steen, President
Ms J White, General Secretary

ICTU HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms L Cooper, Field Officer

ICTU EQUALITY COMMITTEE

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs R Gilpin, Field Officer

ICTU EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary

ICTU LGBT COMMITTEE

Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs L McKay

ICTU ETHNIC MINORITY COMMITTEE

Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Ms J White, General Secretary

ICTU DISABILITY COMMITTEE

Mrs S McKee, Past-President
Mrs P Hurst

ICTU GLOBAL SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

Mr S McCord, Past-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Mrs R Gilpin, Field Officer

ICTU YOUTH COMMITTEE

Mr A Shields
Mr A Davis
Mrs N Billington

ICTU EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

Mr S McCord, Past-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Mrs L Cooper, Field Officer

ICTU CULTURE AND ARTS

Mrs A Steen, President
Mrs A Sawyers

16. **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
Ms A Hall-Callaghan

UNION BUILDING TRUSTEES

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

PENSION TRUSTEES

Ms J White, General Secretary
Mrs R Barton
Mr L Scott
Mrs S McKee
Mr G McVeigh
Mr A Orr

UNION FUND TRUSTEES

Mrs A Steen, President
Mr L Creelman, Vice-President
Mr S McCord, Ex-President &
Deputy General Secretary
Mrs G Dunlop, Honorary Treasurer



17. ATTENDANCES AT CEC MEETINGS

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

OFFICERS

Mrs A Steen, President	11
Mrs L Creelman, Vice-President	11

OFFICIAL/CLERICAL STAFF – in attendance

Ms J White, General Secretary	9
Mr S McCord, Deputy General Secretary	11
Ms L Cooper	8
Mr T McCabe	10
Miss L Osborne	11

HONORARY TREASURER

Mrs G Dunlop	8
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NORTH-EASTERN AREA

Mrs L Fenton	11
Mrs E Loughridge	9
Mr M Creelman	10
Mrs L McKay	9

SOUTHERN AREA

Mrs A Sawyers	8
Mr D Thompson	7
Mr A Shields	9
Mrs J Ravey	7
Miss H Wilson	10

WESTERN AREA

Mrs A Dempsey	11
Mrs J Carrothers	11
Mrs J Mullan	11

SOUTH-EASTERN AREA

Mr A Davis	10
Mrs H Milligan	11
Mrs E McKee	10

BELFAST AREA

Mrs N Billington	9
Mr J Bleakney	9
Mrs J Brown	6 (7)

OBSERVERS

Miss J Jones	11
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18. 2021 CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

MATTERS CONSIDERED BY CEC

Annual Conference determines policy and determines part of the work programme for CEC.

Progress on resolutions to date is as follows:

CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS 2021

Resolution 1 related to maternity/paternity rights and flexible working. The former was lodged with the original pay claim but has now been delayed; the latter forms part of the TNC programme of work and should be reviewed by September.

Resolution 2 welcomed the statement in the New Decade, New Approach document regarding workers' rights and called for improvements in pay and terms and conditions of service. The pay claim is currently under negotiation with terms and conditions being addressed through the general work of NITC.

Resolution 3 pointed to mental health experts in Occupational Health which UTU has raised through the Attendance Procedure work, the THAW review and ill-health retirement work amongst others.

Resolutions 4, 5 and 6 all pointed to under-funding which continues to be high on the agenda in engagement and negotiation with relevant bodies. Remote learning shone a welcome light on the inadequacies of the provision of IT equipment and the Engage Programme has served to highlight the benefits of additional teachers to support literacy and numeracy. Both of these serve a strong purpose moving forward.

Resolution 7 relating to school transport and rural schools has been hampered somewhat by Covid circumstances but remains on the agenda.

Resolution 8 regarding schools' estate and safety has been brought to the fore through ventilation issues and relationships have been established at EA level to bring these issues to the fore.

Resolution 9 pointed to the workload for Teaching Principals which has been ably represented in the work of the Review of School Leaders' Workload by the President, Alison Steen.

The Emergency Resolutions dealt with academic selection, Long Covid and Domestic Abuse.

The first was raised in a variety of fora, including with the Education Committee and directly with the Minister. Work began in relation to the requested

report but it has been delayed due to the constraints of available time arising from Covid demands.

Long Covid and Domestic Abuse are both issues which continue to be raised, particularly in the context of the Attendance Procedure and Teacher Health and Wellbeing.

Resolutions 10 and 11 focused on pupils' mental health and trauma. DE and CYPS would seek to ensure the resources are in place to address these but the current uncertainty around the Budget may impact here. The mental health and wellbeing of staff is on the agenda for the THAW Review.

Resolution 12 dealt with the future of GCSEs which has become a focus for both BIGTU and the Independent Review Panel.

Resolutions 13 and 14 called for improvements in communications with School Leaders by employers and appropriate consultation around the same. These have both been brought forward to the Review of Consultation and raised directly with the employers.

Social Media Abuse in Resolution 15 continues to move up the agenda; it has been a long road but the pressure is being maintained.

Resolution 16 related to diversity and training. This has been pushed through the Safeguarding Forum, the IRE, the EA Equality Review and CYPS. As school life returns to greater levels of normality we would hope to move this forward more rapidly.

19. 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 Covid 19 placed additional onus on all our members and we would like to thank you for the incredible efforts you made to make the functioning of education as effective as it has been. We further thank you for the trust you have placed in us as, at the time of writing, we continue to pursue delivery on the workload reviews and a pay uplift which shows any recognition of the contribution of teachers during this pandemic. We understand the frustrations this has caused, we appreciate your patience, and can assure you that we are doing all in our power to move this situation to the next stage.

The General Secretary would like to record her thanks to this year's President, Alison Steen. Alison entered the role with great enthusiasm and has approached every new task with great wisdom and commitment. She has been a steady and reassuring voice for school leaders, teachers and children, and has been an excellent ambassador for UTU. Alison's support this year has been greatly appreciated and we wish her every success for the future.

Gillian Dunlop, a Past President of UTU, continued with the responsibility of the post of Honorary Treasurer this year, over-seeing the work of the Financial Executive Officer, a qualified accountant. Gillian has been committed and conscientious in her duties and has steered, amongst other issues, the move to refreshed staff structures and the re-leasing of the top floor of the HQ building. We thank her for her dedication.

The General Secretary would also wish to place on record her sincere thanks to the Central Executive Committee for their diligence when monitoring the progress of the pandemic and its impact in schools throughout the year. They were able to reflect accurately the issues faced by members in their local areas, ensuring that UTU kept up to date with what teachers required. They also responded to many calls for emergency meetings, often at very short notice, and were unflagging in their commitment to giving of their time in the interests of others whilst facing huge issues in their own schools. The President continued to steer us on a pathway which responded to the need of members for both information and reassurance, and worked to ensure that School Leaders had a listening ear and practical advice and support. We can assure all members that the work put in by those they have elected to represent them is second to none.

The President, GS and CEC appreciate the huge amount of work put in by Tony McCabe regarding the production of UTU News in-house. The magazine is now available in a range of media to facilitate a range of audiences in staff rooms throughout Northern Ireland. Alison edits the UTU News and has worked hard to engage many schools in its production, bringing good news stories which offered some glimmer of light in the midst of the pandemic and reminded us of why we do what we do.

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, Owen, Bernie 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 has presided over the re-leasing of the top floor of the building this year and has given more than generously of his time in that regard; we are endlessly grateful. 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 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.

Throughout the course of the pandemic, though difficult at times, 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. There has been a new dynamic in recent times where various representatives of Management Side have been working closely with representatives of the teaching unions to deliver on the Reviews, and it is our hope

19. THANKS AND APPRECIATION

that the relationships forged through this process will extend beyond this period to continue to deliver what teachers deserve in the future, particularly in the context of the threat of political instability. We place on record our thanks for their efforts and support.

The CEC would wish to record their thanks to the UTU Officials, Jacquie, Stephen, Leigh, Rebekka and Audrey, to Ashton Shields, Chair of the FIT group and Jillian Johnston, Vice-Chair, and to the members of CEC and invited guests who contributed their expertise to providing support for student teachers, NQTs and RQTs during these difficult times. We look forward to the resumption of the FIT Conference and the opportunity to once again bring fresh eyes and hard-earned experience together.

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 in maintaining an excellent service to members in challenging times. 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, representation, counselling or just standing with them when their individual situation is difficult and demanding. It is appreciated.



ULSTER TEACHERS' UNION



BRIGHTER DAYS AHEAD

ULSTER TEACHERS' UNION
94 MALONE ROAD
BELFAST
BT9 5HP

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