

SSMWG – Support Staff Members Working Group

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2010 at 1.30 pm London Office, Meeting Room 1

Present:	Gail Atkinson (GA)	Anne-Marie Corrigan (AC)
	Aleksandra Bartosz (AB)	Bella Hewes (BH)
	Lesley Batterham (LB)	Peter Morris (PM)
	Gloria Clarke (GC) – via telephone	Debbie Polwarth (DP)
		Yvonne Walls (YW)

1. Apologies for absence

Liz Alexander (LA) – who has resigned from the group, Marjorie Barnes (MBa), Martin Beard (MBe), Jenny Inglis (JI), Stella Thompson (ST).

2. Introductions

Aleksandra Bartosz - new administrative assistant, introduced herself to the group.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2010

The minutes were agreed.

4. Pay 2010/2011 – Maintained Sector

PM updated the group on the pay freeze for school support staff. He referred to the letter from the LGE (Local Government Employers) dated 08/07/10. The letter states that *"The position on local government pay for 2010/11 is that the employers have not offered an increase. This will not change."*

There was a discussion on the issue and PM also informed the group that next years' pay offer will also be subject to negotiation.

Action: PM to keep the group posted on developments.

5. SSSNB

The SSSNB (School Support Staff Negotiating Body) letter of May 2010 was tabled and discussed. It highlights the principles of the SSSNB, and includes the milestones for action during 2010/11.

6. ATL Annual Conference

PM gave very positive feedback on the Support Staff Sector Annual Conference which has now become a permanent feature on the ATL timetable. There were 37 attendees and members were updated on current and important issues such as the SSSNB and the issue of recognition.

The resolutions that were agreed by conference and are relevant to the Support Staff sector are:

A5 – Support staff conditions of employment in the independent sector. PM commented that there is no green book for support staff and that ATL is planning on producing best practice guidance in the form of an advice sheet.

A14 – Support staff development

A23 – Development of support staff. PM talked about the training for support staff and the group discussed the importance of it. Members agreed that support staff often lack induction and general guidelines. Staff should receive restraint training, and every school should have a restraint policy document which should apply to all staff, and not only to teachers.

Action: Members to send comments on conference resolutions and their implementation to PM

Action: PM to meet with other departments and colleagues for further discussion

7. ATL CPD for Support Staff

PM informed the group that travel expenses and accommodation will not longer be refundable for all members (teachers and support staff), except for the Reps training courses and Supporting Yourself courses.

HLTA training (current financial year) - Local authorities and schools may still be able to fund HLTA training, but the TDA will not.

There will be two “Managing Challenging Behaviour” CPD courses for support staff next year and they will take place on 17 March 2011 in London and 6 July 2011 in York.

BH shared information about additional funding options:

- European Social Fund
- FunderFinder – software available in larger libraries (<http://www.funderfinder.org.uk>)

Action: PM to liaise with Kate Quigley (Learning and Development Manager) in order to set the dates for the next academic year “Supporting Yourself” courses.

8. SSMWG – 2010 – 2012

PM mentioned that there has been a major change of the status of the group and that it will now have the same importance as other advisory groups – IPSAG (Independent and Private Sector Advisory Group) and FESAG (Further Education Sector Advisory Group).

There is a new structure to the group and there will be two Lead Executive members: Peter Walker will be joining the Group, and Jenny Inglis will now chair the meetings.

The Group is now elected on a two-yearly cycle. Nominations had been called for, and 9 out of the 10 lay positions have been filled.

The new members to join the group are Kathryn Booth, Marilyn Dixon, Lee Mumbray–Williams and Colin Tennant. They join five current members Gail Atkinson, Gloria Clarke, Bella Hewes, Debbie Polwarth and Yvonne Walls.

The group will meet three times a year, on Saturdays at 1:15 in the London Office and the dates of the meetings have been set by the Executive Committee. The dates are:

- 20 November 2010
- 12 March 2011
- 11 June 2011

DP informed the group that there is a possibility that she may become a member of the Executive Committee and asked PM about the possible conflict of interest.

Action: PM to find out about the possible conflict of interest

It was announced that AC and LB will be resigning from the group. PM thanked LB and AC for their hard work and contribution since the inception of the SSMWG, and the group expressed their appreciation.

9. ATL Membership update

PM presented the latest figures, which show a total of 13,544 support staff members at the end of June. He highlighted the fact that membership continues to grow and that there has been a 50% increase in the number of members in 2.5 years.

10. Joint Unison / ATL Letter

PM referred to the letter sent by Mary Bousted to Branch Secretaries, explaining the current ATL bargaining rights for support staff.

PM talked about the issue of ATL recognition among support staff in the maintained sector, and highlighted the fact that support staff are entitled to join ATL, regardless of recognition.

PM informed the group that ATL cannot actively recruit members in academies as they are still considered as a part of maintained sector.

11. Independent Sector Recruitment Campaign

PM updated the group on visits to the GDST and UCST schools.

UCST visits took place in June and early July. They went reasonably well, and two new school contacts have been identified.

GDST to be visited from September. The visits are being organised by PM.

12. Any Other Business

- a) *Support Staff News* – Provides members with immediate news; it is more up to date, includes more links and is sent to all Reps and Branches but also all support staff members who have provided ATL with their email address.
- b) *Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)* – Has been “put on hold” by the new Government.
- c) *Academies* – PM gave an update on the situation, including the number of schools that have registered an interest in becoming academies in September 2010 or January 2011. There is a joint database between the unions, and all changes will be monitored. The group raised questions and exchanged concerns about the current situation in maintained and independent schools.
- d) GA raised a question about *changes in contracts* and the group discussed possible actions that can/should be taken in order to make sure that the process is handled correctly.

13. Next Meeting

To be held on Saturday 20th November at 1:15 in the ATL London Office.