

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Lifelong Learning Committee

26 August 2015

Teacher Numbers

Report by Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The Scottish Government has established specific requirements related to teacher numbers for local authorities as part of their commitment to maintaining teacher numbers in Scotland. This paper sets out these requirements and how Perth and Kinross Council plans to meet them, as well as the monitoring arrangements that have been established.

The paper also describes the difficulties experienced by the Council in recruiting permanent, temporary or supply teachers, and the measures that are being used or investigated to address these issues.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Scottish Government has stated its commitment to maintaining teacher numbers and as part of its budget process for 2015/16 invited individual local authorities to agree to specific requirements, namely:
- Maintaining, as a minimum, the total teachers full-time equivalent (FTE) at 2014/15 levels and also maintaining, as a maximum, the pupil: teacher ratio at the 2014/15 levels.
 - Places for all probationers who require one, under the teacher induction scheme.
- 1.2 Failure to meet these requirements will result in the loss of the Council's share of £41.3m (£1.1m) included in the Local Government settlement to support the maintaining of teacher numbers, and also the loss of a share (£271k) of an additional £10 million agreed after discussion by the Scottish Government with COSLA (Total: £1.371m). In previous years, the Council has kept the pupil:teacher ratio within the Scottish Government's requirements, but this has not been the case for the totality of the 32 Scottish local authorities. Therefore, these additional requirements (and potential sanctions) have been established individually with Councils.
- 1.3 The Council has provided written reassurance to the Scottish Government that the Council's Revenue Budget for 2015/16 includes provision for these requirements.

2 PROPOSALS

- 2.1 A monitoring process has been established by Scottish Government officials to inform them of teacher numbers in advance of the official pupil and teacher

census in late September 2015 which will establish definitive numbers and ratios. An indication of teacher and pupil numbers was provided for 10 June 2015, although with 1200 fewer pupils in schools due to S6 leavers, the ratio figure was not meaningful. The teacher total was 2.9 FTE fewer than in September 2014. A further indication of teacher and pupil numbers is also required for an additional return for the date of 25 August 2015.

- 2.2 The total teacher number figure includes those working in an early learning and childcare (ELC) setting, as well as those teaching in primary and secondary schools. However, the pupil:teacher ratio excludes ELC pupils and teachers as there is no robust census of ELC pupils. Table 1 shows the 2014/15 (actual) and 2015/16 (projected at full September census) teacher and pupil numbers. The teacher figures set out for 2015/16 represent the numbers the Council is required to meet or exceed, to be in line with Scottish Government requirements.

Table 1: Perth and Kinross Teacher and Pupil Numbers 2014/15 (actual) and 2015/16 (projected)

	2014/15	2015/16
L1. Total Teacher FTE (including ELC ¹)	1,370	1,370
L2. Total Pupils (excluding ELC)	17,750	17,668
L3. Total Teacher FTE (excluding ELC)	1,336.5	1,336.5
L4. Pupil:Teacher Ratio (using $\frac{L2}{L3}$)	13.28	13.23

- 2.3 Projected pupil numbers are based on current rolls, projected staying-on rates and the new intake registered² to start in the first term of 2015/16. Figures will be confirmed in the definitive staff and pupil censuses on 16 September 2015.

Probationer Teachers

- 2.4 Probationer teachers are allocated to local authorities by the Scottish Government. For 2015/16, Perth and Kinross Council requested 46 primary and 40 secondary probationers. Probationers indicate five preferences for the Local Authorities where they wish to undertake their training. Perth and Kinross tends to be choice 4 or 5 along with most other areas outwith the central belt. Research by the Scottish Government indicates that this effect is related to probationers establishing themselves (socially and otherwise) in the cities where they have undertaken their University degree. They are more likely to want to complete their training in the same region where they studied and there are no teacher training facilities at Perth College UHI.
- 2.5 Of the 86 probationers the Council requested, a total of 68 probationers (46 Primary and 22 Secondary) have been allocated to Perth and Kinross. A total of 63 are currently confirmed in post, comprising 73% of the original request. This shortfall clearly highlights the challenge presented to the Council in maintaining numbers with new teachers as others retire or move on.

¹ Excluding ELC partnership centre teachers

² Known registrations as at 13 July 2015

Impacts of difficulties in teacher recruitment

- 2.6 There is a recognised shortage of qualified teachers seeking work in Scotland – now at a 10-year low. Perth and Kinross is similar to many other Councils, especially those with smaller schools in rural areas, in experiencing difficulties in recruiting teachers, for permanent, temporary and supply positions. It has also been a particular challenge in recruiting to shorter fixed term vacancies eg for maternity cover. Whilst budgets exist for teachers in line with the Scottish Government requirements, the limiting factor in most cases is successful recruitment to fill these budgeted posts. Looking ahead, workforce intelligence suggests that there is likely to be a significant number of vacancies arising due to the ageing teacher population.
- 2.7 The Scottish Government announced in February 2015 that an additional £100m was to be made available to raise attainment and close the educational inequalities gap (via The Scottish Attainment Challenge). Seven, mainly central belt Councils, are to receive a substantial share of this funding. Their plans include recruiting additional teachers to support them in their improvement journey. Although this initiative is to be warmly welcomed it may have an adverse effect elsewhere by making it more difficult for other Councils to recruit teachers.
- 2.8 In Perth and Kinross, Education and Children's Services has always worked hard to staff schools with the budgeted number of teachers. The staffing situation is a fluid and challenging one as these examples illustrate:
- There was a 6.5% annual turnover of permanent teaching staff in 2014/15, although this has reduced from 9.2% in the previous year.
 - At any given time in the year, around 40 posts require cover for maternity/paternity/adoption leave, and there are also promotions to respond to.
 - There were 1482 individual requests from schools for supply cover over the course of 2014/15 and 39% of these were not met.
 - At the start of the academic year, some staff who have agreed to join as part of a recruitment exercise in May/June invariably indicate that they have received an alternative job offer elsewhere. In 2014, this caused a shortage of 7 FTE on the first day of term, requiring cover arrangements.
- 2.9 Teacher shortages are managed as efficiently as possible by individual schools, but there will be inevitable effects which will cause additional pressure to be felt by existing staff in schools:
- Impacts will be felt in the continuity of teaching and learning and some subject shortages.
 - Where Headteachers and Deputies are required to provide cover themselves, this can have an impact on the efficient wider running of a school, and can reduce their involvement in improvement activities, parental engagement and professional learning and networking. Some Headteachers and Deputies have been fully class committed for many months to deal with staff shortages.
 - Consistent provision of the Reduction in Class Contact Time (RCCT) has been adversely affected in a number of schools.

Short term measures to address difficulties in teacher recruitment

- 2.10 Permanent teaching appointments have been made to some fixed term arrangements, where this can be managed within current budgets, to make these posts more attractive. Additional teachers (up to 10 FTE) are being appointed to support schools and ensure that numbers are maintained for 2015/16. This is easier to accomplish in primary schools due to the flexibility offered, but more difficult in secondary schools where subject specialists are required.
- 2.11 Other steps taken include:
- Early release of vacancies as part of the Annual Staffing Exercise in an attempt to capture the biggest pool of applicants.
 - Offering permanent contracts to employees who have successive fixed terms, providing security of employment.
 - Using the Compulsory Transfer Policy by deploying individuals across the Service to meeting demands.
- 2.12 A range of additional incentives for posts that are difficult to fill have been piloted, and approved or extended by the Executive Sub-Committee of Strategic Policy and Resources on 30 July 2015. Removal and relocation expenses, travelling expenses for supply, and permanent supply posts have been used with partial success to ensure that schools have been appropriately staffed. A range of other incentives can be used where difficulties exist, but market supplements need to be used carefully where there is potential impact on neighbouring authorities or on equal pay arrangements within the Council. Research has been carried out with other authorities to establish and learn from their practices and successes. Other potential adjustments being developed include:
- Reassessing the application of relevant work experience when considering the starting salary for main grade teachers.
 - Reviewing the application of the Job Sizing toolkit.
- 2.13 The Council's Supply Teachers Review Group continues to look for ways to streamline the administration of the supply teacher system in areas such as supply advertising, recruitment of retirees and text messaging. It also engages with national bodies to reduce or remove obstacles.
- 2.14 The Council has secured the use of specialist press across the rest of the UK to advertise teaching vacancies, and at the same time promote the benefits of relocating to Perth and Kinross. Social media are also used.

Medium/Longer Term Measures

- 2.15 As approved by Executive Sub-Committee of Strategic Policy and Resources on 30 July 2015, the Council has reached agreement to work in partnership with The University of Dundee to offer a funded teacher training course for Council employees who have graduate qualifications (Learn to Teach Programme). These staff would still work in the Council and receive their normal salary but would be supported to study for their teaching qualification,

part-time over 18 months. The course will commence in January 2016 and the intention is to offer 20 training places.

2.16 Endorsement is sought from Committee for the investigation of other longer term options, namely:

- Supporting local qualified teachers, who are not working, to return to the profession via a specific 'return to teaching' course.
- Measures that 'recruit' students to Perth and Kinross Council during their teacher training.
- The provision of affordable housing to assist in recruitment of all hard-to-fill posts where difficulties are particularly acute (including teachers), recognising that housing costs in much of Perth and Kinross are amongst the highest in Scotland.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Notes the contents of this report;
- (ii) Endorses the approaches already undertaken to address difficulties in teacher recruitment, as set out in 2.10 – 2.15; and
- (iii) Endorses the investigation and development of longer-term measures detailed in 2.16.

Author(s)

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Approved

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	Yes
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	No
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	N/A
Strategic Environmental Assessment	N/A
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	N/A
Legal and Governance	N/A
Risk	Yes
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	N/A
Communication	
Communications Plan	N/A

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement through Objective No 2: Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens.

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 The Perth and Kinross Community Plan 2013-2023 and Perth and Kinross Council Corporate Plan 2013/2018 set out five strategic objectives:
- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
 - (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
 - (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
 - (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
 - (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to Objective No. (ii)

- 1.3 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Policy Framework in respect of the following key policy area: Maximising Resources.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 The Head of Finance has been consulted on the contents of the report. The additional teachers will initially be funded from within the Education & Children's Services Revenue Budget from projected staff slippage. If the projected slippage is not sufficient to fully fund the additional teachers a request will be made to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for additional funding.

Workforce

- 2.2 The Corporate Human Resources Manager has been consulted on the contents of the report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 N/A

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties. Proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) and assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

Sustainability

N/A

Legal and Governance

- 3.4 N/A

Risk

The risks involved with teacher numbers are monitored as part of Education and Children's Service risk profile.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 Head of Education (Secondary and Inclusion), Head of Education (Early Years and Primary), Senior Business & Resources Manager, Finance and Governance Manager, HR (Chief Executive's Service).

External

- 4.2 N/A

5. Communication

- 5.1 N/A

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.