

**Tim Bowman**  
**Director of Education**  
**(Tameside and Stockport)**

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**To: Headteachers/Chair of Governors**

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Ask for Tim Bowman  
Direct Line 0161 342 2050  
Date 30 November 2021

Dear Headteacher/Chair of Governors,

### **Trade Union Support Service Level Agreement 2022/23: De-delegated services**

You will be aware that each year Schools Forum is asked to consider if funding can be de-delegated to support the delivery of some services. One of these key services is to supply the services of local trade union representatives to your school and your staff, often referred to as Trade Union Facilities time.

Unfortunately, in recent years, the take up of this service has been reducing and for this financial year (2021/22), Schools Forum voted not to de-delegate budgets for the supply of this service. Whilst I appreciated the reason this decision was reached, I continue to believe that this is a vital service and that the best way to support it, is to de-delegate funding.

In reaching their decision, Schools Forum representatives were clear they wanted to continue to discuss this service and these discussions have been ongoing throughout the year. The Council has reflected on these discussions and I am extremely pleased to update you on a number of actions undertaken in response, with the aim of further increasing value for money for your school. It is my hope that these actions will mean that school leaders feel able to support the de-delegation of trade union support for the forthcoming financial year. The vote will be taken at Schools Forum on 13 January 2022.

Before I advise you of the actions undertaken, I again want to take this opportunity to remind you of the significant benefits I believe this SLA offers to your school, the wellbeing of your staff and to our Tameside school community:

- Local, easy access for your staff to trade union representatives who have local knowledge and expertise to help them with employment related matters, enabling staff and school leaders to resolve workplace issues quickly before they escalate, thereby aiding improved working relationships. Escalation of workplace issues often prove costly and damaging for schools, with early intervention being paramount.
- Support and collaborative working with school leaders/governors to enable smooth and effective management of change; school reorganisation plans; implementation of policies and procedures for school-based staff.

- Ability for you as school leaders/governors to ensure delivery of your statutory obligations as contained within the Employment Relations Act 1999, the Trade Union Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1997, with regard to the management and delivery of reasonable facilities time for trade union representatives.

Collaborative working with our local trade union representatives has never been more important than during the pandemic. With the support of local trade union representatives, schools have been supported to react appropriately and quickly when dealing with constant change.

In response to the feedback received last year and following our discussion with headteacher representatives, the following actions have been undertaken:

- A review of the existing Council Facilities Agreements with the local recognised trade unions, ensuring clearer transparency of facilities time and activities undertaken on behalf of schools.
- A reduction in the cost for schools for this service for the forthcoming financial year 2022/23, with the per pupil rate being presented in January 2022 to Schools Forum at £4.80 per pupil, compared to last year's rate of £6.13. This amount has been calculated taking into account the actual take up across schools this financial year. However should more schools buy in for 2022/23 then the cost can be further reduced. For example, if our full complement of 98 schools across our campus bought this service the cost would significantly reduce to less than £3.50 per pupil.
- Recommendations for a different delivery model for the supply of local teaching staff trade union representatives and their facilities time, to be introduced on a transitional basis over the next two financial years, in response to headteachers and regional teacher trade union representatives' requests.

In order to explain these changes in greater detail, we have organised a half hour presentation by zoom for you, with the Council's Human Resources service. This will take place on Wednesday 08 December at 8:00am in order that it does not impact on the rest of your busy day. An outlook diary invite for this presentation will be sent to you.

I am proud of the way we work together in Tameside; the strength of our relationships with our Trade Union colleagues is, in my view, vital to our partnership.

It is for this reason that I am taking the extraordinary step of writing to you directly to ask that you give your Schools Forum representative the mandate to vote yes to de-delegation at the Schools Forum meeting on 13 January 2022.

Many thanks, as ever.



**Tim Bowman**  
**Director of Education (Tameside and Stockport)**