

ITEM No ...5.....

REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES COMMITTEE - 28 NOVEMBER 2016

REPORT ON: STAFFING LEVELS IN DUNDEE SCHOOLS

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 376-2016

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 Reference is made to Article V (II) of the meeting of the Education Committee of 27 April 2015 where it was agreed to instruct the Director of Education to produce an annual staffing report detailing the teacher number and pupil teacher ratio provided for the annual Scottish Government census that is carried out each September. In addition, information was requested on the effectiveness of current recruitment and retention procedures, pupil-teacher ratios (PTR) and projected workforce requirements across educational sectors. This report provides an update of teacher staffing levels in Dundee Schools.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members of the Children and Families Services Committee are requested to note the content of the report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 This report details the teacher numbers and the pupil:teacher ratio in Dundee schools as provided for the September 2016 census. It further sets out the effectiveness of current recruitment and retention procedures and the workforce requirements across educational sectors. The report highlights local and national issues impacting on the recruitment of permanent and supply teachers and the current recruitment position within Dundee.

4.2 The Scottish Government has a commitment to maintain national teacher numbers and a pupil:teacher ratio of 13.7:1 as part of the agreed budget process for the financial year 2016-17. Dundee City Council is committed to maintaining teacher numbers and to providing places for all Newly Qualified Teachers entering the profession each year through the initial teacher induction scheme.

4.3 The teacher numbers and the pupil:teacher ratio in Dundee schools have been collected and presented for the September 2016 census and the national report will be published in the middle of December 2016. The Dundee submission for teachers is 1398.0 FTE and the pupil:teacher ratio based on a total school roll of 17 999 is 13.2:1. The total teacher number includes teachers across all educational sectors as well as specialist teachers working in areas such as Offsite Education, Bilingual Support and the Outreach team. The 30.0 FTE teachers working within pre-school settings are included in the total teacher FTE figure but are not included in the calculation of the pupil:teacher ratio since this is only based on the number of pupils in the primary and secondary sectors. The 15.7 FTE teachers who are employed as part of the Scottish Attainment are not included in the pupil:teacher ratio calculation.

Dundee statistics for 2015 and 2016	2015	2016
Total Teacher FTE	1408	1398
Total Pupil roll	17914	17999
Pupil:Teacher ratio	13.0	13.2

- 4.4 It should also be noted that through the Scottish Attainment Challenge as well as other initiatives there has been a significant increase in the number of support staff working in school along with an increase in support staff from partner organisations working in schools. Although these additional support staff are not directly involved in the provision of standard curricular delivery they play a vital part in the development of pupils' social and emotional wellbeing as well as supporting the delivery of wider curricular and achievement opportunities.
- 4.5 Given the challenges faced by a number of council areas in meeting teacher numbers, the position in Dundee is positive. A considerable amount of work has gone into the recruitment process for permanent and supply teachers in pre-school, primary and secondary settings. There has been a rise in the number of supply teachers, particularly in the primary sector and the recruitment process has further increased the number of permanent posts previously filled by supply teachers. Once again, the success of the recruitment process has taken place during a period of widely reported teacher shortages. The slight reduction in the overall teacher numbers and the increased pupil:teacher ratio can be explained as follows:
- The closure of Menzieshill High School meant that the 21 senior management and principal teacher (subject) posts were deleted.
 - At the point of the census week there were 15.0 FTE vacancies comprising 9.5 FTE in the primary sector and 5.5 FTE posts in the secondary sector. This represents 1% of the total teacher workforce. Since the census week we have successfully recruited a further 6.0 FTE teachers and continue to advertise for the remaining 9 FTE vacant posts.
 - Only 17.0 FTE NQTs were appointed to Dundee secondary schools which was considerably less than our expected number of 34.0 FTE.
 - There are currently 47.0 FTE teachers on maternity/paternity leave. This represents 3% of the teaching workforce.
 - A total of 76 FTE teaching posts were offered in the primary sector for the start of August 2016 but there were 29.0 FTE withdrawals between June 2016 and the start of the new term given that posts were accepted in other council areas. This was in contrast with only 6.0FTE withdrawals in the secondary sector.

Recruitment, Retention and Workforce Planning

- 4.6 The annual recruitment process has been challenging at local and national level in recent times. The challenges have been the subject of considerable discussion and have been reported widely in the media. It is clear that despite an increase in the number of training places for student teachers, a number of council areas continue to experience difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff. A key issue at secondary school level is that the number of students on teacher training courses is well below the number of available spaces. The staffing position in Dundee is that a significant number of Newly Qualified Teachers, permanent teachers and supply teachers were recruited for the start of the session in August 2016. This is a positive development but there is a clear recognition that additional work and ongoing recruitment is required in the coming session to fill vacancies, ensure that all teaching posts remain filled and increase the number of supply teachers.
- 4.7 There has been an increase in the number of Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) within the primary sector this session but a significant reduction in the number of NQTs for the

secondary sector. The current position is that there are 53 NQTs in the primary sector but only 17.0 NQTs in the secondary sector which was considerably less than our expected number of 34.0 FTE. The shortfall in the number of secondary NQTs had a clear impact on the workforce planning process.

- 4.8 The issue of teachers accepting posts in schools then withdrawing at very short notice has an impact on effective workforce planning. Given the current level of teaching vacancies across the country, candidates have a considerable degree of choice. This has resulted in the situation where applicants accept posts then withdraw when offered an alternative post that may be more suitable to their needs in terms of location or travel distance. In the three month period prior to the start of the session in August 2016, 29 primary candidates and 6 secondary candidates withdrew their letter of acceptance and indicated that they had accepted posts in other council areas.
- 4.9 The selection and appointment of suitably qualified teachers who have approval to teach in the denominational sector continues to present a challenge at local and national level, particularly in the primary sector. In discussion with senior representatives of the Roman Catholic Church, active steps have been taken to recruit permanent teachers and will continue to be a focus.
- 4.10 Maternity and paternity leave arrangements are built into the workforce planning model since the teachers need to be replaced throughout the leave period. At this point in time there are 47.0 FTE teachers across the city on maternity leave. This is 3.0 FTE higher than the figure in 2015. Each teacher requires to be replaced for the duration of the leave period which normally lasts for one full year. This is broken down by sector in the following table:

Sector	FTE 2016
Pre-School / Primary	30.0
Secondary	17.0
Total	47

- 4.11 The availability of sufficient numbers of supply teachers has improved but is a continued challenge. A number of teachers who are classified as 'permanent supply' teachers within the primary sector provide cover for maternity / paternity leave or long term absences. The current strategy is to increase the number of permanent supply teachers working in the primary sector so that there will be greater capacity to cover short term absences. One of the barriers in the current market is that a number of teachers have indicated their preference for a permanent teaching post within a school setting rather than employment as a permanent supply teacher. The solution in Dundee is to offer teachers a direct route from the permanent supply pool into permanent school posts thereby reducing the time spent in a supply position.
- 4.12 The supply position is more complicated at local and national level in the secondary sector given the nature of subject specific teaching requirements and the limited short term supply pool. This presents workforce planning issues given the difficulties of predicting the subject areas which will be affected by absence. The local solution has been to build up the supply pool using recently retired staff. The entire supply list for primary and secondary teachers was updated and renewed over the 2015 summer period and new arrangements introduced to speed up the application process. In addition, all teachers who are about to retire are given the opportunity to be placed on the supply list with immediate effect so that they can make a seamless transition from a permanent post to the supply pool.
- 4.13 Workforce planning approaches have been updated and revised based on recent recruitment experiences. Calculations to measure the annual staff turnover have been brought forward to February of each year and the recruitment process to recruit new teachers and the NQT cohort takes place at the earliest possible stage so that a clear staffing picture is available prior to the Easter holiday period.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Executive Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

MICHAEL WOOD
Executive Director of Children and Families

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