

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING

TO:	ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES & EDUCATION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	11 DECEMBER 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	8
TITLE:	FAIR WORKLOAD CHARTER		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	CLLR PEARCE	PORTFOLIO:	LEAD MEMBER EDUCATION
SERVICE:	EDUCATION	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
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1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides the Committee with a summary of discussion and the resulting agreed Reading Pledge for a fair workload agreement for school based staff. The resulting Pledge provides a set of guiding principles that underpin a fair workload for staff but that also allows for flexibility in the ways school implement strategies to achieve a fair workload, based upon the diversity of school operational practice and the individual working patterns of staff.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Reading Pledge be supported as a basis for promoting a fair workload for teachers and school based staff in Reading's schools.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 There has been increasing concern with respect of the workload facing teachers and school-based staff. Several government agencies have recognised the need to reduce workloads in an attempt to maintain and increase the number of teachers entering and remaining in the profession.
- 3.2 Ofsted have published clear statements to counter the perception that inspectors are looking for particular forms of paperwork and planning, perceptions that have been seen to have fuelled increased bureaucracy and paperwork for teachers. The DfE have similarly provided guidance on ways of reducing teacher workload, most recently in their Policy Paper 'Reducing Teacher Workload' (Nov 18). In June 2018, the DfE published a Workload Reduction Toolkit, and in November, a Reducing

Workload video was created along with the setting up of a Teacher Workload Working Group with recommendations for reducing workload associated with data management.

- 3.3 Some local authorities, notably Nottingham City, have created fair workload charters to guide a commitment across their schools to manage teacher workloads and to reduce unnecessary working practices. Following a review of such charters, Reading have consulted with schools and with teacher unions and professional associations to determine a Pledge that the local authority and schools can support and work together to implement, as a means of ensuring a work-life balance for teachers, and therefore contributing towards the broader teacher recruitment and retention strategy across our schools.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 Teacher recruitment and retention is a growing challenge nationally. However, with the cost of living in Reading along with the higher teacher salaries available on the London fringe, recruiting and retaining teachers in Reading will continue to be a challenge. Good and outstanding teaching is a significant contributory factor in ensuring that pupil achievement is strong. Whilst the most able pupils generally do well across Reading's schools, the more vulnerable, the disadvantaged, and those with special educational needs, often do not make the progress they need to be able to enter employment education or training post 16.
- 4.2 Making teaching attractive has to be a key priority for Reading if our ambitions for high achievement and progress for all pupils is to materialise. Part of this is to ensure that schools enable teachers to maintain a fair work-life balance and their health and professional well-being is supported. A significant contribution to this is the agreement of fair workload practices.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is no legal underpinning that determines the way teachers work, and how they should manage and prioritise their workload. Teachers' conditions of service outline their roles and responsibilities, but some key areas that have been perceived to be adding to teachers' own administrative work pressures have developed unchecked. Despite national discussion and guidance to the contrary, there is a perception that teachers' own administrative workload is increasing. Schools and school leaders are in a position to manage a fair workload among their staff. However, schools organise and operate in different ways. Individual teachers have preferred ways of working which are sometimes determined by external factors beyond the school including family and commitments. Therefore, to meet the diverse range of teachers' needs, any fair workload pledge needs to provide sufficient flexibility to meet the diverse range of needs.

6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 6.1 The purpose of this section is to ensure that proposals contained in reports are in line with the overall direction of the Council by meeting at least one of the Corporate Plan priorities:
1. Securing the economic success of Reading and provision of job opportunities

2. Ensuring access to decent housing to meet local needs
3. To protect and enhance the lives of vulnerable adults and children
4. Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe
5. Ensuring that there are good education, leisure and cultural opportunities for people in Reading
6. Ensuring the Council is fit for the future

6.2 The decision to note and accept the follow up actions meets strategic aim 1, i.e. securing the economic success of Reading and provision of job opportunities.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

7.1 Section 138 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 places a duty on local authorities to involve local representatives when carrying out "any of its functions" by providing information, consulting or "involving in another way".

7.2 The local authority has worked with schools and unions to agree the draft Fair Workload Agreement.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2 This is not relevant.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no legal implications.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no financial implications.

11. Annex 1

11.1 The attached Annex is the result of negotiations and consultations across schools, the local authority and professional associations and unions. The Annex outlines the suggested Reading Pledge on fair workload for teachers and school based staff. It provides a set of guiding principles and some suggested 'good practice' examples in

place in some schools which can be used and added to by schools over time to continue to provide an appropriate work-life balance for staff.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None