

Hi Andy

In response to your email regarding facility time, I have looked at what I have done as far as time has allowed and found that my use of facility time has been broadly similar to that of Tim Wasdell from the NASUWT.

In common with Tim I was also involved in the 12 meetings with various schools with regard to TUPE, Redundancy, working practices, etc.

There have also been several meetings with T&W and email consultations around proposed changes to local agreements.

As you will appreciate, I do not routinely log all time spent on this but it was carried out in time located for union activities by my previous school.

I have been in contact with T&W by email and telephone on numerous occasions from Autumn 2015 to present to deal with subjects ranging from simple queries on policy to finalising settlement agreements. Unfortunately, I am unable to give the exact amount of emails due to the majority being deleted by mistake during an upgrade to my laptop. However, there would have been at least 70 emails since September 2015 and at least the same number from April to August 2015.

I have attended 5 days NUT training in the last 12 months in order to keep up with changes to laws and procedures.

From 1st December 2015, the Wrekin Division NUT have had joint division secretaries taking one day facility time each per week (we are allocated 2 days per week between us). This should ensure that individual cases are dealt with more quickly which will be of benefit to both schools and members. My colleague Ian Newcombe at Charlton school is also our Health and Safety Representative.

So far this financial year we have spent approximately 55 actual days away from school between us and dealt with a variety of cases. For example, there have been three long term sick absences two of which resulted in settlement agreements, capability procedures, two resulting in settlements, as well as numerous enquiries from members that I have been able to deal with by advising members without having to get the schools involved. It is these sort of cases that form the bulk of our work and which never get seen by Headteachers.

The alternative to having local union representatives with facility time to carry out vital duties representing members and find acceptable solutions to workplace issues is that all cases would have to go to our regional officers. As we currently only have one regional officer covering the whole of Telford, Shropshire and Staffordshire it is clear that cases would take much longer and potentially cost much more to resolve.

There are also many additional benefits in continuing to pay for facility time. I believe we have very good relations between schools and the unions in Telford and Wrekin and as a consequence issues are generally resolved in a reasonable time.

Regards,

Keith Smith
Secretary