

**Schools Forum 3rd Dec 2019  
Agenda Item 6 -De-delegation 2020-21**

**Summary of points made**

Miss C Glasgow requested that the recommendation in the paper not to de-delegate Union Facilities for 2020-21 be reviewed. She stated that if she had known when the Maintained Schools Sub-committee meeting was taking place earlier in the term, she would have attended that meeting to make the case for continued de-delegation. In response to a question about how the meeting was advertised to Forum members it was clarified that this was through the Schools Bulletin which Miss Glasgow confirmed that she could not access.

Miss Glasgow made the following points:

- The Union Facilities fund is used to release staff from their substantive teaching roles so that schools can provide teaching cover for the classes they would otherwise be teaching without financial loss to the school concerned.
- Election to Union lay officer roles takes place on an annual basis, usually in April/May, in line with each Union's own rules.
- Currently there are a number of supply teachers and retired teachers in union roles who are not eligible to claim from the Facilities fund and this has been the case for a number of years.
- Elections in the past year have seen union lay officer vacancies filled and also school employed staff taking on lay officer roles so the situation is now changing.
- De-delegating Union Facilities at Schools Forum level enables economies of scale to be achieved by individual schools and for employers to fulfil their legal obligation to release employees for trade union duties.
- The Union Facilities fund supports mainly the work of the County Secretaries and caseworkers.
- Training for accredited caseworker's amounts to 4.5 days initially and then 3 days per annum thereafter.
- In addition to training, caseworkers need to be released from teaching roles to represent members at formal meetings.
- From a school's perspective and, in order to ensure continuity of education for pupils, it is better for union lay officers to have designated time off timetable so that classes are taught by another teacher who is timetabled at those times, rather than ad hoc release and the need for the school to find a supply teacher.

In response to a question about monitoring of the Union Facilities fund, Miss Glasgow clarified that funds are allocated to each Union and the County Secretaries then collate information regarding time off for their own lay officers and send it to the Local Authority for payments to be made to the relevant schools.