

TRADE UNION FACILITY TIME
SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

*Note in this document, "Schools" is used as shorthand for schools, academies and colleges

Q1. What is the total amount of money spent on Union Facility time and how is the facility time spread between unions?

A1. Total projection for 2012-13 is £163,660 (See "TU Facility Time 2012-13 anonymised").

NUT	£124,013	76%
NASUWT	£25,597	16%
Unison	£14,048	9%

Q2. How much facility time would be made available from the money raised by the proposed pooling?

A2. The current budget covers NUT 11 days per week, plus 2 days for the NUT branch secretary in his capacity as Teachers Side Secretary, 0.6 FTE for NASUWT and 0.5 FTE for Unison (see NUT letter of 23 May 2012)

Q3. Could a reduction in total time allocation be considered?

A3. The Local Authority understands that schools wish to revise downwards the costs to schools associated with the facilities agreement and this is a point of discussion with the trade unions. (See Gerry Kemble's letter of 5 February 2013)

Q4. Are all schools and Academies being asked to contribute, including the sponsored Walthamstow Academy?

A4. Invitations to pool have been sent to all nursery schools, maintained primary and secondary schools, all-through schools, academies, Walthamstow Academy, and the three sixth form colleges.

Q5. What happens if some/many schools do not agree to the pooling? Does that mean:

- a. the levy will be increased for those agreeing so the amount of facility time can remain the same, or
- b. The amount of facility time is reduced and those schools not contributing do not get the “service”
- c. Something else?

A5. This will have to be explored with the trade unions, however Council officers would be seeking to press for scenario (b). Schools not pooling might experience delays and other restrictions (such as lack of access in usual working hours) in accessing local branch representatives.

Q6. The method of arriving at £1.69 and £5.06 is unfair and simplistic, can this be reconsidered? Schools do not receive equal amounts of per pupil funding.

A6. This is an issue for the community of schools to determine. Unlike other pooling, where the local authority has offered pooling arrangements as an alternative to individual service level agreements, trade union facility time is not a local authority service, so it is for schools to take a collective view of the level of shared provision and the funding arrangements, if any. The local authority will model different contribution methods if this is of assistance.

Q7. Should there be some recognition of the varying degrees of need for union work in a particular school? To put it another way, shouldn't schools where local union reps are required more, pay more, and those schools that have good industrial relations pay less? Not dissimilar to the concept of a “no claims bonus” in the insurance industry.

A7. Again, this is an issue for the community of schools to determine. One funding model could be where the school employing and providing cover for a local representative charges each institution for the time that the local representative spends there. The local authority or a school could hold the pooled budget and administer a charging and refund system, but it would be likely that the cost of administration would need to be recovered.