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The Educational  
Institute of Scotland

[www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)

The Scottish  
Educational  
Journal

June 2014  
Vol. 98  
Issue no. 04



**AGM**  
EDITION  
2014



## Comment

This special edition of the SEJ reports on the 168th Annual General Meeting of the EIS. This year's AGM was held in Perth Concert Hall.

The AGM is a key event for the EIS, but it is also watched very closely by others. Scotland's media cover the AGM in depth, and the debates and decisions of conference are followed closely at both local and national government level.

To help keep members informed, the EIS website – [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk) – featured live updates on the progress of the AGM, a smartphone friendly online app and a dedicated Twitter feed via the hashtag

#eisagm giving additional information direct from inside the conference hall.

At this year's AGM, teachers and lecturers from across Scotland took the opportunity to send clear messages to both local and national government on major issues such as teacher workload, Curriculum for Excellence, child poverty, pay and conditions, pensions, and funding for education.

Over the 16 pages of this SEJ, we highlight the issues discussed and the decisions taken at this year's AGM. We also report on the conference addresses by outgoing President Phil Jackson and by

# AGM EDITION 2014

General Secretary Larry Flanagan.

We hope you enjoy reading this special AGM edition of the SEJ, and wish all our readers the best for an enjoyable and refreshing summer break.

# WORKLOAD CONCERNS DOMINATE AGM



## Invigorating the Workload Campaign



**"The Workload Campaign, like any campaign, is only as strong as the people who get involved in it."**

Susan Quinn

Susan Quinn (Glasgow), speaking on behalf of EIS Council, successfully called for AGM to recognise the progress that has been achieved through the EIS Workload Campaign and for the EIS to press for full implementation of the recommendations of the Working Group on Tackling Bureaucracy.

"The Workload Campaign, like any campaign, is only as strong as the people who get involved in it. The campaign is about engaging members and empowering members in order to deliver real reductions in workload. This campaign is about giving our colleagues the power to question what is asked of them and to refuse excessive workload and unnecessary bureaucracy," said Ms Quinn.

Seconding the Motion, Adam Sutcliffe (Aberdeenshire) said, "The workload implications of the new qualifications have been unacceptable. These burdens have been imposed on teachers by the SQA."

Kay Barnett (Aberdeenshire) spoke of the workload implications of the faculty structure. Ms Barnett highlighted that the faculty system has increased workload

across the board for teachers at all levels, with faculty Principals taking on the role of multiple former PTs and unpromoted teachers assuming greater workload in areas such as mentoring of probation year teachers.

Bill Ramsay (South Lanarkshire) highlighted the importance of educating members on their rights and encouraging activism amongst the membership.

## Action on Workload



**"We have members at breaking point"**

Annie McCrae

The EIS will prepare a campaign of action, including possible industrial action, in opposition to increased workload in schools and colleges as the result of a successful Motion from Annie McCrae (Edinburgh).

"We have members at breaking point," said Ms McCrae, "So we need to make sure that momentum is maintained, our campaign progresses and that we deliver a meaningful reduction in the crippling workload burden. Working Time Agreements have to empower our members to say No, and industrial action also has to be part of our armoury."

The Motion was seconded by John Dennis (Dumfries & Galloway), with Celia Connolly (Glasgow) also speaking in support.

## CfE Workload – Impact on Teachers and Lecturers With Additional Support Needs



**"Teachers with disabilities are also more likely to suffer from bullying and harassment in the workplace"**

Julie Ferguson

Orkney delegate Julie Ferguson successfully moved for the EIS to investigate the impact of increased CfE workload on teachers and lecturers with additional support needs.

"Research from just five years ago highlights negative perceptions of teachers with disabilities. Teachers with disabilities are also more likely to suffer from bullying and harassment in the workplace," said Ms Ferguson. The Motion was seconded by David Drever (Orkney) and backed overwhelmingly by AGM.

## National Demonstration Motion Remitted to Council for Action

A Motion proposed by Glasgow Local Association, calling for the EIS to organise a national demonstration in support of the EIS Workload Campaign, was remitted to EIS Council for further development and action.

Explaining the rationale for a Remit, Hugh Donnelly (Glasgow) highlighted that the STUC was already planning a joint demonstration in the Autumn on the impact



of austerity and its implications for workers, and so it was logical for the EIS to work in partnership with fellow STUC affiliated unions rather than hold a separate event.

## Updating ASN Policy

The EIS will review its current policy on Additional Support Needs in light of the Children and Young People Act, budget cuts and the EIS Workload Campaign following a successful Motion from Susan Quinn (Glasgow). “Our advice to members needs to reflect the realities so that it meets the needs of members in schools, colleges and Higher Education institutions”, said Ms Quinn.

Seconding the Motion, Jean Miller (Glasgow) said, “We often hear politicians talk about the aims and benefits of the Children and Young People Bill. What we don’t see is a priority being placed on resourcing it.”

## Raising Awareness, Encouraging Activism



**“It makes me want to tear out my hair when members fail to attend branch meetings, respond to surveys, or even vote in a ballot on their own pay and conditions”**

Alan Gardiner

The EIS will explore ways to raise awareness of the work of the EIS and to encourage new and existing members to become involved at local and national level, following a Motion proposed by Megan McCrossan (North Lanarkshire) and seconded by Alan Gardiner (North Lanarkshire).

“We need to look at why a large number of our members do not engage with the EIS,” said Ms McCrossan. She added, “We need to try to engage members in all sectors and all groups of our membership. There is no magic fix – we already do a great deal to communicate with and engage our members – but we need to continue to try.”

Mr Gardiner added, “It makes me want to tear out my hair when members fail to attend branch meetings, respond to surveys, or even vote in a ballot on their own pay and conditions then, if they are unhappy with the result, they ask ‘What is the union going to do about it?’ Our employers, the Scottish Government and others love the fact that we are not all together.”

## Supporting Local Associations

The EIS will investigate how improvements can be made in the support available to Local Associations, Branches, Local Association Secretaries and Branch Secretaries following a successful Motion from Ken Brown (East Dunbartonshire) which was seconded by Kevin O’Brien (East Dunbartonshire). Speaking in support,

Lynne Robertson (East Dunbartonshire) said, “Our LA and Branch Secretaries put up with incredible stresses and strains in their work to support our members.”

## Training for EIS Representatives

Jayne Rowe (Glasgow) was successful in proposing a Motion calling for a review of the training of EIS Representatives. “All our Learning Reps are fully accredited, as are all our Equality Reps. But our branch level Reps, who are the backbone of our union, are not given the same level of training or accreditation. We need to move towards a model of comprehensive training for all our Reps.” The Motion was seconded by Carolyn Ritchie (Glasgow), with Glasgow LA Secretary Hugh Donnelly also speaking in support.

## The Impact of Budget Cuts



**“CfE cannot succeed without sufficient numbers of staff.”**

Vicky Smith

East Dunbartonshire delegate Lynne Robertson successfully called for the EIS to investigate the impact of budget cuts on pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, those on the autistic spectrum and those with visual and hearing impairments and also on nursery teachers, classroom assistants and support staff.

“The group of pupils that we are talking about here are some of the most vulnerable pupils in Scotland. The Scottish Government talks about getting it right for every child, yet the resources needed to get it right are being cut,” said Ms Robertson.

Seconding the Motion, Vicky Smith (East Dunbartonshire), said “We have witnessed local authorities cutting nursery teachers from a sector that is absolutely essential to children’s early development. CfE cannot succeed without sufficient numbers of staff. It often appears that local authority interest starts and stops with making financial savings.”

## Class Sizes



**“Without proper funding we don’t get it right for any child.”**

Claire Scott

Delegates overwhelmingly voted in favour of a Motion calling on Council to redouble its efforts to resist the cuts in spending using all means at its disposal. Moving the Motion, Diane Smithyman (Western Isles) said: “reducing class size is an expensive option but it must be at the forefront of our planning. Large classes put pressure on our professional practices.” Seconding the Motion, Helen Connor (North Lanarkshire)

talked about the reality of larger class sizes and linked this with the current EIS Workload Campaign. “Class sizes of 18 did not happen. The Scottish Government and COSLA should be ashamed. Class sizes have quietly crept up putting our most vulnerable young people in Scotland at risk. It is time we decided that workload and class sizes are linked,” she said. The EIS will now reinvigorate the campaign to reduce class sizes in Scotland in line with current EIS policy.

In a separate debate, the AGM resolved to seek a review of class size regulations as a result of significant numbers of vulnerable children with additional support needs being allocated to mainstream classes. Carolyn Ritchie (Glasgow) moved the Motion and reminded delegates that as special schools disappeared so did a lot of experienced staff. As a result, she warned of the potential for schools to fail to meet the needs of large numbers of pupils with moderate needs. Seconding the Motion, Jayne Rowe (Glasgow) said “multiple children with support needs is a challenge. There is confusion out there on the rhetoric of inclusion. Inclusion must be resourced.”

## National Staffing Standard

The EIS is committed to campaign for both a national minimum staffing standard which includes class teacher allocation, management allocations and management time and for the retention of the total teacher numbers as agreed by the SNCT Agreement in June 2011 following the success of a Motion moved by Jayne Rowe (Glasgow). She reminded delegates that while the Scottish Government can give commitments on teacher numbers, individual Councils determine their own staffing arrangements and formulae. She added: “Staffing is a key resource. A national minimum staffing standard ensures equity and parity across Scotland.” Helen Connor (North Lanarkshire) warned in the absence of forward planning the pool of available supply teachers had dried up. “We should be staffing our schools and colleges beyond any minimum number. If workforce planning was done properly, we would not be in this position,” she said.

## Teacher Workload Toolkit

“We have become complacent about working time agreements. We need a tool which will guarantee professional autonomy.” That was the message given to Conference by Glasgow Council member, Hugh Donnelly. He said “We have focussed too much on annualised hours. It is disingenuous to ignore the real time implications of what teachers are being asked to do weekly.” The successful Motion from Glasgow called on Council to develop a toolkit for a professional audit of the 35 hour working week possibly in the form of a mobile application.

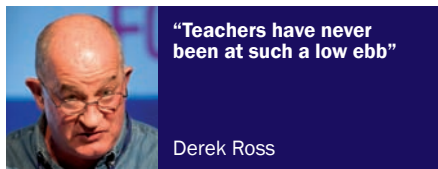
# Education Debate

## Major Focus on SQA



### National Qualifications Concerns

Andy Harvey (South Lanarkshire) spoke of teachers' reactions to the "Frankenstein's monster" of assessment and verification procedures created by the SQA, as a "form of professional meltdown." He urged the EIS nationally to expose to public scrutiny, the failure of the SQA to deliver a coherent and workable Senior Phase, to investigate and report on the workload implications of verification procedures, to publicise teachers' concerns about the number of internal assessments within the new National Qualifications and to enter into discussions with the SQA to secure a reduction in the burden of assessment and a suitable modification of existing arrangements. Mr Harvey highlighted the abject failure of the Senior Phase to meet the needs, in particular, of young people who, often as a consequence of poverty, were unable to perform at the academic standard required for a pass at National 5 level.



**"Teachers have never been at such a low ebb"**

Derek Ross

Charlie McKinnon (Glasgow), in seconding the Motion, was vociferous in criticising the Scottish Government and the SQA for their handling of the new qualifications. He said that the implementation process to date represented "the most chaotic and amateur roll-out of any curriculum...at the level of professional embarrassment" and described the burden placed on teachers in the classroom as "absolutely crushing." Derek Ross (Aberdeenshire) said that in 41 years of teaching he had never seen colleagues "at such a low ebb." The Motion was passed with an overwhelming majority in favour.

Debate on a subsequent Motion from Edinburgh Local Association further highlighted the unsustainability of teacher workload associated with new qualifications. Jim Pringle (Edinburgh) stressed how many teachers were "at breaking point" as a consequence of it and advocated "prevention rather than cure."

Verification featured yet again in a Motion put by Edinburgh Local Association.

Moved by Allan Crosbie, it demanded that the SQA hold only one round of verification per year, that the EIS lobby such bodies as SQA, Scottish Government and parent representative groups in support of the demand, and that the demand be included within any campaign of industrial action related to CfE and new qualifications. Mr Crosbie commended the work of all those in the EIS who have applied the pressure that has resulted in some movement in a positive direction by the SQA to date.



**"Changes announced so far by the SQA do not go far enough"**

Kay Barnett

A related Motion moved by Kay Barnett, Education Convener, demanded that the Scottish Government and the Curriculum for Excellence Management Board commission a comprehensive and independent review of the implementation of new qualifications involving teacher trade unions and the wider teaching profession. The aims of the review are: to secure a reduction in bureaucracy and workload; a lessening of the burden of assessment and verification to create more time for deeper learning; increased provision of verified assessments and clear, concise and readily accessible guidance on assessment requirements. Ms Barnett said that the changes announced so far by the SQA do not go far enough, that the original aims of CfE have been "lost in translation" and that this was "not the fault of Scottish teachers but the fault of lack of leadership and strategy in change management." The Motion was seconded by Sonia Kordiak (Midlothian) and supported further by Mike Smith (Edinburgh) and Bob Colman (Highland) both of whom highlighted the inadequate time available for students to complete the significantly greater number of assessments, citing cases of teachers and pupils coming in to schools on Saturdays to get Unit Assessments completed. Again, the Motion was passed with an overwhelming majority.

A separate Motion moved by Mike Dolan and seconded by Stewart Paterson, both of West Dunbartonshire, instructed Council to investigate and report by December 2014, on the SQA exam diet and the allocation of time to National 4, 5 and 6 courses. Mike

Dolan pointed to the fact that the SQA "randomly shortening the teaching year" to suit its own timetables had resulted in a significant time deficit for learners. AGM gave its full support.

Allan Pettie (Midlothian) successfully moved a Motion calling upon the Scottish Government to reaffirm the principles of CfE and to address the inconsistency in curricular models within local authorities. He said, "The Scottish Government has failed to provide a lead" in relation to curriculum architecture, which has resulted in deep uncertainty, leaving "local authorities like deer caught in the headlights." Seconding the Motion, Mark Ireland also of Midlothian said that pupils should be assured of "equality of ...experience" rather than the "lottery of uncertainty" as at present.

**"The students who are affected by this are highly disadvantaged...If we are a union that's committed to inclusion, I would urge you to support."**

Kenny Mitchell

Within another Motion focussing on National Qualifications, delegates from Renfrewshire Local Association called upon the Scottish Government, SQA and Education Scotland to ensure that fit for purpose teaching courses and resource materials are provided for all National 3-6 courses. The Motion included a call for a ballot on industrial action up to and including strike action in the event of failure to deliver the terms of the Motion. Moving, Kenny Fella (Renfrewshire) criticised the quality of much of the course material provided by Education Scotland to date: "Off the shelf? More like off the scale when it comes to insulting our intelligence." Brian McGovern, Renfrewshire LA Secretary, identified the SQA as the "main culprits" in the troubled implementation process saying, "We have to do something about it. The time for talking is over." The Motion was carried with an overwhelming majority.

Louise Carey (Glasgow) raised concern about the "contradictory" and "conflicted" arrangements attached to National Literacy Assessments at N4 and N5 levels for young people with additional support needs. She moved a Motion calling upon Council to monitor and report on the impact of such assessment arrangements. In seconding





# Motions

the Motion, Kenny Mitchell (Glasgow) said, “The students who are affected by this are highly disadvantaged...If we are a union that’s committed to inclusion, I would urge you to support.” AGM delegates did so overwhelmingly.

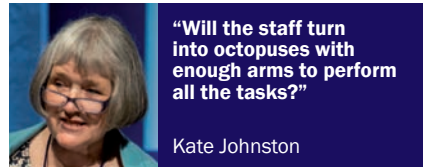
Overwhelming support was also given by delegates to a Motion moved by Sonia Kordiak (Midlothian) seeking a Scottish Government review of the role and legal status of the SQA and of its accountability and transparency, as well as the granting of a place for the EIS on the SQA Advisory Board. Ms Kordiak argued that these measures were an appropriate challenge to the “SQA’s lack of responsiveness to the profession” to date. The Motion was seconded by John Swinburne (Edinburgh) and further supported by Adam Sutcliffe (Aberdeenshire) who told delegates that passing the Motion would “ensure that the voice of those delivering the qualifications is heard loudly and clearly.”

## Nursery Education



Council will mount a campaign for the retention of nursery education across Scotland with the aim of lobbying the Scottish Government to legislate and/or regulate to ensure meaningful access to a GTCS registered nursery teacher for all pupils. The EIS will also campaign for the assurance that student teachers on nursery placements are both mentored and have their placements signed off by fully qualified and GTCS registered teachers, and highlight the clear distinction between nursery education and childcare. Moving the associated Motion, Margaret Smith (Falkirk) stressed the need for EIS Council to “campaign vigorously” to ensure the integrity of nursery education. She said, “Nursery teaching is a highly skilled, specialist job and it’s not just playing with the weans.” Valerie Hughson (Shetland) in seconding the Motion warned of the dilution in the quality of nursery education resulting from qualified teachers being used to cover for absent colleagues. “Meaningful access to a nursery teacher for all children does not mean one day a week,” she argued,

this being an inadequate amount of time in which to get to know children and assess their progress. The Motion was passed with an overwhelming majority.



A second Motion focussing on nursery education instructed EIS Council to investigate and report on how the extended hours for nursery education and childcare are being delivered within each local authority in Scotland as well as the impact that this will have on time for liaison, preparation and planning. The Motion also instructed Council to develop and disseminate best practice recommendations to all members in the sector. Kate Johnston (Edinburgh) argued that nursery staff are already overstretched in their endeavour to “support our children with high quality education.” Anticipating the extended hours provision and its resultant demands in terms of time she asked, “Will the staff turn into octopuses with enough arms to perform all the tasks?” The Motion was seconded by Sue Burns (Midlothian) who warned that the increase will result in a lack of liaison time for staff which is “absolutely crucial” to the successful provision of nursery education of high quality. Again, delegates supported the Motion with an overwhelming majority.

## Inset Days

Delegates were successful in gaining the backing of AGM for a Motion calling on Council to campaign for parity of Inset Day allocations across all sectors. Susan Quinn (Ex-President) referred to the Scottish Government’s announcement on the opening day of the AGM that an additional Inset Day would be granted for Primary and EarlyYears sectors in line with that previously allocated to Secondary, highlighting this as a “long, hard-fought victory for the EIS” and as proof “that there is a point in fighting.” She said that although the aims of the Motion had already been realised, the EIS must remain “determined to fight for equity across the sectors...because the issues related to CfE are consistent across the sectors.” Seconding the Motion, Nicola Fisher (Glasgow) welcomed the Scottish

Government’s announcement but stressed the importance of individual schools having the autonomy to decide what is done on the Inset Day.

## CfE Planning



Megan McCrossan (North Lanarkshire) moved a Motion calling for all planning processes to be coherent, manageable, carefully monitored, and an enhancement to teaching and learning. “We’ve had the shiny green folders for over five years,” she said, “but we’re still trying to work out the best way to track the Es and Os.” She stressed the need for teachers to use the Scottish Government’s Tackling Bureaucracy Report to challenge unwieldy systems of planning, either paper or electronic. Seconding, Lorraine McBride (North Lanarkshire) told delegates, “We need to be mindful of the Workload Campaign.” The Motion was passed with an overwhelming majority.

## ASN Cover

**“Exclusion through inclusion is affecting children’s education,”**

Des Kenny

A Motion condemning the lack of guaranteed ASN support to children and young people legally entitled to it, as a result of inadequate cover arrangements was moved by Des Kenny (Glasgow). The Motion also instructed Council to publicise the ASN cover deficit and its negative impact on all pupils. Mr Kenny argued that current ASN staffing levels are far below what is required to deliver genuine inclusion. “Exclusion through inclusion is affecting children’s education,” he said. Seconding, Marion Ross (Moray) gave weight to the debate, highlighting inadequate provision for traveller children, English as an Additional Language support and Speech and Language therapy. She warned that such deficits brought local authorities “dangerously close to breaching legislation” and to “not getting it right for any child.” AGM gave its overwhelming support to the Motion.

# Education at the Crossroads

EIS President **Phil Jackson** used his AGM speech to warn that Scottish education is now at a dangerous point.



## I'd like to start with a little bit of social and cultural history.

There was once a man called Robert Johnson. For those unacquainted with him he was a blues singer who, like most blues singers, endured extreme poverty and met all kinds of discrimination in his life. There is a particular song of his called 'Crossroads' that has always resonated with me.

Why do I mention this song in particular? Well, in general terms, I believe we are at a crossroads in education, maybe not the same sort of 'crossroads' Johnson was at, but a crossroads just the same.

I want to look at what is happening to the members of our sister unions in other parts of the UK. I am not suggesting for one

**“While our political and educational masters expend their energy in producing document, upon document, initiative upon initiative teachers are just expected to get on with it.”**

minute that the doomed social experiment being visited upon pupils, parents and teachers by the Con-Dem coalition and its Education Secretary Michael Gove and so vividly described in Melissa Bunn in her book 'School Wars' will ever happen here, but it is a striking and salutary illustration of how education is often regarded as a political football and is considered fair game for anyone to declare themselves experts.

Teachers in England and Wales are certainly at a 'crossroads' and I applaud the resistance by the NUT and others to the right-wing ideology that threatens to snap the very roots of our society.

In Scotland it is somewhat different of course. Nevertheless we should not delude ourselves into thinking that we are not at a crossroads ourselves and cannot be nudged into a direction we don't want to go in. Actually, it has happened already.

The landscape before the 5-14

curriculum came in, a land that time forgot, had promise. The progressive primary education of the 60s and 70s had introduced cross curricular teaching long before CfE, secondary teachers were true subject specialists and schools up and down the country were having literacy hours and working integrated days.

The profession, by and large, welcomed 5-14, although some senior members of the profession urged caution. Everything seemed to start pretty well but it soon became apparent that teachers were being turned into deliverers of programmes of study, that the system had an inherent logical flaw that led to teaching in 'silos' rather than in a sequential and cumulative way,

that the curriculum in the primary was filling up with more and more bits and pieces that were assuming the mantle of subjects.

Of course there have been strides forward in the past few decades. CfE came along as the answer to our dreams. Few educationalists could argue with the philosophy nor with the aspiration to change education for good.

However, we must not forget that CfE has been twelve years in the making and is still not fully formed. Momentum and seizing the day hardly seem to feature in its lexicon. Why? For one thing a lack of investment but, even more crucially, a lack of consistency

So we ask why the primary curriculum has not been de-cluttered? Cross curricular work was already part of the primary mindset anyway so there wasn't much mileage there for making the curriculum deliverable in a 25 hour teaching week.

We ask why the school is increasingly seen as the panacea for the shortcomings of society. Indeed we might even ask what the role of parents and families is in this new societal, wrap around care role that

schools are expected to perform. At the same time the initiatives keep piling on top. While our political and educational masters expend their energy in producing document, upon document, initiative upon initiative teachers are just expected to get on with it.

A message for Bill Maxwell of Education Scotland and Mike Russell the Cabinet Secretary - do the Maths and see if you can get it to add up.

Also, see if you can explain why nursery teachers are disappearing when the curriculum has been extended from 5 to 3 (in the 3-18 model of CfE). Tell us how we can 'close the gap' when children start school up to 18 months behind their peers.

At the other end of the spectrum where are the physical and human resources going to come from for the report on developing Scotland's young workforce to become a reality? When are our young people between 16 and 24 going to stop being written off?

In between nursery and young adulthood how are the principles of Curriculum for Excellence going to be reconciled with an examination system that hasn't really changed that much?

The only differences seem to be that pupils up and down the country are going through the same system in countless different ways with different numbers of subject choices, different arrangements for periods of study, even different opportunities for pupils in terms of the old Higher and the new N6 Higher.

A system where teachers have to bear the additional burdens of verification, lack of exemplification and an inadequate level of support from the SQA, where pupils are being tested more than ever.

The review currently in progress must sort this out and sort it out fast. We must never find ourselves in this muddle again.

There are 12 Motions mentioning the SQA this year and, at a recent meeting with them, we left them under no illusions



that the pressure from us will be relentless until they, and their partners, get their act together. The review of what took place cannot be a whitewash.

Teachers have worked so hard this year for their pupils and any success must be credited to them. SQA and Government must get it right next time.

But that does not mean we must forget what happened this year. There is the issue of our S4 pupils experiencing the spectre of failure at an early stage and being the most tested generation of pupils ever - contrary to the principles of CfE and also, the broader issue of how sustainable a broad general education curriculum is when it leaves so little time it leaves to teach courses leading to awards.

And it is with not a scintilla of pleasure that I repeat - if the voice of the EIS has been listened to, and had a year's delay in the new examinations been allowed I believe we, and more importantly the young people of Scotland and their parents, would be in a better place than we are now.

Still we must look to the future and particularly our own future. Building membership engagement has never been more imperative. We have only made steps so far but need to start making strides.

We must never forget that we are a lay member led union. All of us here today decide policy for the year ahead. We must also set the example in terms of engagement.



Another crossroads we face is what direction we head in to ensure the success of our current campaigns. Our Workload Campaign is reaching a critical point. Where do we go with it?

Excessive workload and bureaucracy have plagued our profession for decades. When the working group on tackling bureaucracy reconvenes in the Autumn, we need to see some some tangible progress.

If not we need to be prepared to take further action.

Nor must we lose sight of one of the most important campaigns we have ever fought - the campaign on pensions. Some might think that now that increased contributions have been imposed upon us this is over. Not as far as we are concerned. We will not rest until the large group of teachers, who didn't make the cut-off point and are NPA 65 or beyond rather than NPA 60 and also tied into the linking of the NPA and SPA, are treated with justice and fairness.

## **“Excessive workload and bureaucracy have plagued our profession for decades”**

The pensions reforms have been exposed for what they are, part of an attack on the public sector and a ham-fisted attempt to reduce a deficit caused by an irresponsible and poorly regulated financial sector.

Politicians of all hues need to be left in no uncertain terms that, whether Scotland votes yes or no in the Referendum, inaction is not an option. We need to have a proper discussion on what is a reasonable career length for teachers.

As for the immediate future the progress in sidebar discussions on working longer have been disappointing thus far. We need a genuine, tangible commitment from the Scottish Government.

Following the acceptance by our members of a package on pay and conditions we must now turn our attention to our future pay strategy. The trouble with depressing public sector pay to the level the Con-Dems have is that it is a short term measure that stores up trouble in the longer term.

The United Kingdom is still one of the wealthiest countries in the world. Of course there is money to spend on what is important. Growth predicated on suppression of the public sector is neither economically or morally prudent nor is it acceptable to our members.

This is one of the big questions politicians have to answer in the lead up to the Referendum vote in September and, indeed, the next general election - others include how exactly can teachers and schools deliver a new curriculum, a new examination system, early years and ASN provision in a climate of continuing cuts?

At the very time the MSPs are voting the Children and Young People's legislation through the Scottish Parliament, schools are struggling to provide the most basic of support for their pupils.

Getting it right for every child will not happen unless there is a significant

investment in resources, unless there are enough teachers in classrooms, unless there are enough properly remunerated supply teachers.

We truly are at a crossroads in education where government must choose what its priorities are.

Does it want a properly funded system of CPD and professional update, properly resourced schools, a properly supported and trusted teaching profession and one which does not feel that its health and wellbeing and work/life balance are being compromised by the ridiculous and unsustainable demands put upon it?

Does it really care about the importance of early years provision and, if so, why is the service expanding at a time when the number of teachers is contracting?

Does it really have a plan for realising the laudable aims of the report of the commission on developing Scotland's young workforce and actually providing positive and sustained destinations for our 16 to 24 year olds? Will it give schools and colleges the funding to make this dream a reality?

What is it going to do to bring stability to our university and college sectors when members' pay and conditions are attacked on a regular basis by unscrupulous employers? There is a very real sense in which issues like college regionalisation and a return to national bargaining are at that pivotal crossroads moment.

And, probably the biggest agenda of all, the scourge of poverty and inequality. We need to get behind the common weal approach and face up to the fact that poverty is a failure of economics and must be fixed economically.

We have come a long, long way since the days of Robert Johnson who lived in the first part of the last millennium. Robert did not have the chance of an education to escape from poverty. He died, aged 27, after drinking whisky poisoned by a jealous husband and had no money for a doctor.

The crossroads he stood at offered him little choice but today we do have a choice and we need to exercise that choice. Our partners in education and those who manage education must come with us on a road not into the educational cul-de-sac that we have become so used to but on a road less travelled, perhaps, where they are prepared to stand up for education and listen and act upon the voice of the professionals.

- Edited extract of the President's AGM speech. Full text available from [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)

# AGM Extra

## Local Authority Representation

Grant Bruce (Aberdeen) successfully called for an EIS investigation into the implications for teachers in local authorities who have indicated their intention to withdraw from COSLA.

## Appointment Process for General Secretary

Pat Flanagan (Aberdeenshire) successfully moved for a review and report on the appointment process for the EIS General Secretary with regard to potentially electing the General Secretary for a fixed term and for all members to have a vote in that election process.

Mr Flanagan said, "The General Secretary is the public face of the EIS, so it is right that we look at the process for election so we can decide whether to retain our current process or change it."

## Charitable Status

The EIS will campaign for a change in the law regarding the charitable status of independent schools, following a successful Motion from John Dennis (Dumfries & Galloway). "Private schools save millions every year by virtue of their charitable status – money that would otherwise go into public finances," said Mr Dennis.

## Two Hours of Quality Physical Education

Jo Hill (Orkney) successfully moved a Motion calling on Council to investigate and report on the availability of resources and access to quality CPD for staff to deliver the weekly two hours of quality physical education prescribed by the Scottish Government.

## The "Groupthink" Phenomenon

AGM resolved to recommend to the Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) that it develop and implement courses on the phenomenon of 'Groupthink' and strategies on how to avoid it following the success of a Motion from Edinburgh Council member, Allan Crosbie.

## Electronic Payslips

The EIS will put pressure on Local Authorities to establish the principle that teachers have the right to have access to their pay details outwith the workplace following the success of a Motion from Inverclyde delegate David Munro.

## Energy Drinks and Children

Alison Thornton (Edinburgh) moved a successful Motion that called for the EIS to campaign for a ban on selling energy drinks to children under the age of 16.

Seconding, Phil Pearce (Edinburgh) said, "These drinks are not good for you – they contain huge amounts of sugar and caffeine. One can of these drinks may contain seven times as much caffeine as a cup of coffee."

## New Fellows of the Institute honoured



**New Fellows of the Institute:** 1 Professor Nigel Osborne (Honorary Category), Composer and Educationalist 2 Lachlan Bradley, (Special Category) Retired EIS Area Officer 3 Graham Jarvie, Teacher, Earlston High School 4 Viviane Joyce, Teacher, Marr College 5 Ian Scott, Teacher, Kilsyth Academy 6 Robert Colman, Principal Teacher, Lochaber High School 7 Timothy Birrell, Teacher, St Joseph's College 8 Larry Flanagan, EIS General Secretary 9 Phil Jackson, EIS President 10 Tommy Castles, EIS President Elect 11 Norma Anne Watson, Convener of the Board of Examiners

In offering thanks on behalf of all the new EIS Fellows, internationally renowned composer and educationalist **Professor Nigel Osborne** delivered an inspiring speech which touched on the history of the EIS and the value of education as a means of empowering social change. Professor Osborne, until recently the Reid Professor of Music at the University of Edinburgh, spoke of the potential of music and the creative arts to reach and engage children in learning, including children who have suffered horrific experiences in their everyday lives.





# Fringe Meetings

This year's AGM featured an enhanced exhibition for external organisations and an extensive Fringe programme, including events on The Referendum, Poverty Social Justice and Education; Job Satisfaction and Teacher Wellbeing; and a Scottish CND event, The Case for Scrapping Trident.

## Referendum Debate Highlights Busy Fringe Programme

Equality Vice-convenor Mary Matheson chaired the Fringe event on The Referendum, Poverty, Social Justice and Education. It featured external speakers from the Child Poverty Action Group (Hannah McCulloch) and from both sides of the Referendum debate – Dennis Canavan (Yes Scotland) and Murdo Fraser MSP (Better Together).

Scottish Conservative MSP Murdo Fraser, representing Better Together, said the problem of poverty was not unique to

Scotland and argued that Independence wouldn't magically make it better.

Former Labour MP and retired Independent MSP Dennis Canavan, representing Yes Scotland, said that the sovereignty accorded under Independence would allow a future government to adopt fairer socialist policies.

Child Poverty Action Group Policy Officer Hannah McCulloch, taking no side on the constitutional question, said only a progressive social security system, secure employment and a guaranteed living wage could begin to address the crisis.



## Scottish CND – The Case for Scrapping Trident

Arthur West, Chair of Scottish CND, put the political, moral and financial case for scrapping Trident at the organisation's Fringe event on Friday afternoon. Mr West also highlighted the availability of new Peace Education Packs and the organisation's School Speakers Programme

– further information is available from [www.nuclearweaponsdebate.org](http://www.nuclearweaponsdebate.org)



## Job Satisfaction and Teacher Wellbeing

Nearly 7,000 EIS members recently completed the recent EIS online survey and delegates attended the meeting to receive an analysis of the results from researcher Rachel Bishop from Scott Porter.

The health and wellbeing survey, commissioned by the EIS and published in May, indicated that severe workload pressures are placing strain on teachers leading to increased stress and health problems. Ms Bishop said that the results were statistically robust and contained strong responses from a diverse mix of people.

### The survey revealed:

- 2 in 3 respondents indicated that they were deeply concerned about work-life balance.
- Only 12% of respondents were satisfied with their workload
- 45% of respondents felt stressed all the time
- 74% of respondents said workload was impacting upon the well-being of teachers

Respondents were least satisfied with workload, the curriculum and their working hours. Workload and paperwork were the two main items to be addressed.



# Stark Warning on Workload

In his annual Report to the AGM, General Secretary **Larry Flanagan** cautioned that current levels of workload are engulfing teaching professionals across Scotland.



**This year we welcome around 30 first time delegates to the AGM. Hopefully this will act as a catalyst to further involvement in the work of the union. We had 50 first time delegates last year, and such large numbers of new delegates are a positive for the future of EIS activism.**

Coincidentally, that figure of 30 is the number of colleagues coming off the EIS Council this year – many because they are heading into retirement. I want to place on record our thanks to all of these Council members. The roll of those departing Council this year includes three former Presidents – Jack Barnett, Kay Barnett and David Drever – the EIS will miss your experience and counsel and I sincerely hope that you enjoy retirement.

We will face the continuing challenge of filling the gap whenever we lose such highly experienced and valued colleagues from the EIS. But we are more than up for that – we have managed for 168 years and we will continue to do so.

Whilst referring to activism, may I once again pay tribute to our Branch Reps. In

**“In 33 years as a classroom teacher and now two years as General Secretary, I have never witnessed the levels of exhaustion and despair that have been so evident amongst teachers this year.”**

what has been a really challenging year, they once again provide this union with its real backbone.

I've made the point in various fora over this session, that workload pressure is not something new for teachers, for most of us it has been a constant backdrop to our professional lives. But in 33 years as a classroom teacher and now two years as General Secretary, I have never witnessed the levels of exhaustion and despair that have been so evident amongst teachers this year. That is testified to by the hard evidence contained in our recent survey

on teacher well-being and job satisfaction, which found that:

- **Only 1 in 3 teachers and lecturers are satisfied with their job**
- **Only 1 in 4 who enjoy a sense of high well-being**
- **Only 1 in 5 who feel that they have good work/life balance**
- **Only 1 in 10 who are satisfied with workload at present.**

These are sobering, even shocking statistics. Scottish Education needs, and our children and young people deserve to be taught by – a highly motivated, highly respected cadre of professional educators

But let me highlight the conclusion of the report, as to the true state of affairs:

“All in all it appears that teachers and lecturers feel that they are climbing a never ending mountain that makes more and more demands of them, with little prospect of respite. Responses therefore show that teachers and lecturers, as well as being dissatisfied, do not feel that they are being heard, valued as professionals or given the support they require. As a result, the bank of goodwill that drives their overall vocation to remain in the profession is steadily decreasing and their warning [our warning] is that it is not limitless and will indeed run out.”

All of this serves to underline the importance of our Workload Campaign and the need to continue with it and indeed intensify it where required. To date we have succeeded in placing the workload issue centre stage but progress in achieving the campaign aim, that real time reduction, is still too limited.

The Tackling Bureaucracy report is an important document for us. It was published last November but hard copies eventually

found their way into schools in February – then school branches needed to arrange meetings – it was all a slow process.

A number of members have commented favourably on the Report's contents and recommendations – which I think are clear and unambiguous – not particularly a hallmark of anything CFE related.

But two key points need to be made. Firstly, the very existence of the document is testimony to the fact that CFE implementation has not been all that it should have been – the poor practice identified is real, despite the relentless good news story we continue to hear from local and national government.

Second is that this Report is just a piece of paper unless it is acted upon. Everyone in Scottish education signed up to this document. I repeat a message that I have been iterating in our workload meetings – to reduce workload teachers need to stop doing something. Stop trying to do everything because that way workload will never decrease

The role of the union is to provide the collective strength for members to say “No.”

Our survey reveals the constancy of workload pressure across all sectors from nursery through to Higher Education but it also offers clear evidence that the issue has been at its severest this year in secondary education – and this is clearly linked to the introduction of the new qualifications.

The exam diet has just concluded and thankfully no major issues have been reported around the National 5, although there are some subject specific items to be pursued. Candidates can expect their result in due course – the SQA don't anticipate any problems in that area but of course the exams themselves were probably the most straightforward part of the year; getting to them has been the challenge.

The experience this year for both pupils and staff has been unacceptable and frankly is unsustainable. The fact is that Scottish teachers have worked to breaking point and beyond to deliver these qualifications, and should be applauded for that, but this should not obscure the point that this is no



way to manage change in our curriculum.

The SQA and others need to be held to account for what has been a visceral experience in our schools this session. We welcome the fact that some changes are already happening – unit verification for example. The reflections group is due to report shortly with both short and longer term recommendations.

But I think we should be absolutely clear that this past year is not what the CfE Senior Phase was meant to be about.

- **Reduce assessment burden for staff and pupils – fail**
- **Maintain breadth across the senior phase – fail**
- **Promote deeper learning – fail**
- **Parity of esteem to vocational options – fail**

What has been done at the moment is little more than swapping the Credit and General for National 4 and 5 and if that is all that changes then CfE senior phase will have been a monumental waste of time.

The EIS was the lone voice for most of the time in calling for the qualifications to be delayed, but we were right. There is a lesson to be learned for those running education – listen to the practitioners, listen to the profession.

I'd like to make a point about professional unity – the EIS offers an ideal model for an education union: representing all sectors and all grades. It's absolutely imperative that trade unions work together. We have long-standing connections with teacher unions in England, Wales and Ireland and strong partnership working with our sister union the SSTA here in Scotland – I hope that we can continue to build on that.

The importance of that professional voice is a theme that has been explored in the series of professional update events that have been held over the past session.

It's clear that professional learning is an area of interest and engagement for members, and we are taking that forward through various partnership approaches.

Professional Update launches in August of this year for all teachers – and I congratulate the GTCS for how they have taken this forward because the scheme that we are looking at is a million miles removed from the “5 year MOT for teachers” that was first being discussed and which is likely to the approach adopted south of the border.

The Litmus test will be how local authorities deliver their side of the bargain in terms of resourcing CPD opportunities and, of course, time is a key resource.

The challenge in a time of austerity is a very real one. In Scottish Education there is a persistent gap between policy and practice, between the rhetoric and the reality as experienced by practitioners. Closing that gap is the challenge.

I would like to welcome the Cabinet Secretary's invitation to the EIS to participate in the recently announced Review of the Early Years Workforce. Childcare and Early Years education is enjoying a rare moment in the political sun at this time, as each of the political parties seeks to outbid each other in terms of who has the most progressive policy.

Through the STUC, the EIS has always supported, and will continue to support, progress in this crucial area and we recognise the benefits and equality issues involved in enabling parents, mainly mothers, to participate in employment. But we are also mindful of the rights of the child and we are clear that childcare is not the same as education.

We will continue to campaign therefore for the crucial role of nursery education, and nursery teachers, as part of the pre-5 experience which children are entitled to.

At the other end of the education spectrum, I think AGM should recognise the sterling work done by our ULA and FELA Self Governing Associations in exposing the scandal of zero-hours contracts.

A particular commendation is due to our FELA negotiators who have successfully created the framework for a return to National Collective bargaining in the FE sector. This is no small feat of negotiation, so we should send our congratulations to all involved.

We recently published our manifesto for the Referendum, and many delegates will be

**“A particular commendation is due to our FELA negotiators who have successfully created the framework for a return to National Collective bargaining in the FE sector.”**

looking forward to our fringe event featuring debate between the two campaigns. The EIS has been careful to respect the different attitudes that undoubtedly will exist amongst our membership - teachers are as liable to be divided on the issue as the rest of the population.

It is interesting to note that the almost wholly devolved nature of Scottish Education might actually be cited as a case in point for both sides of the debate.

The No camp can point to it and say that

it shows how devolution works. It is certainly true that devolution, and a sense of our own history, has seen Scotland develop a very different model of education from that south of the border. Here, in Scotland, education continues to be seen as a societal good.

The Yes Campaign can equally cite our education system as an example of what might be achieved where control is Scottish based – the Scottish Government has not been slow to point the finger at UK austerity programmes and, in particular, pension changes.

People will make their choice on which side of the debate they prefer. To date however, there has been insufficient focus on defining the type of Scotland we wish to live in rather than simply arguing about the constitutional arrangement.

The recent Common Weal report helpfully set out its vision for a future Scotland based on shared values such as equity, fairness, and social justice; a society where participative democracy and active citizenship are the norm.

These are the same values which underpin the new GTCS standards, the values which imbue our own policy debates. Values that, as a trade union and a professional association, we need to assert at every opportunity

Our recent wellbeing survey indicated that the one area of work which teachers found almost universally rewarding was their relationships with the young people we teach. We need the type of Scotland,

irrespective of the Referendum result, where those young people are allowed to flourish.

The EIS has a long history, 168 years, of being a proud civic

voice in Scottish life. We will continue to speak up, and even to shout out, for the interests of Scotland's children and young people, and indeed their families who trust so much in our education system.

We will continue to speak up and shout out for Scottish teachers and lecturers and to speak up and shout out in the interest of social justice in our society.

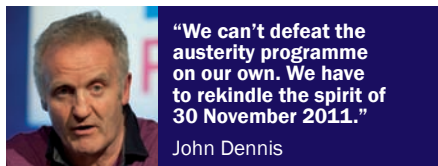
I believe that playing our part in building a better Scotland is a challenge that the EIS is more than capable of rising to.



The General Secretary thanked all those leaving Council, including former Presidents Kay Barnett, David Drever and Jack Barnett (pictured L to R)

# Motions

## Restorative Pay Claims



Delegates debated two Motions which dealt with the subject of "restorative pay claims". Moving the first Motion, Convener of the Salaries Committee Tom Tracey (Inverclyde) said that all public sector workers had to develop a common course of action. He called on the EIS to initiate discussion within the STUC and TUC and with the main local government unions in Scotland (UNISON, UNITE and GMB) with a view to developing a common restorative pay claim by December 2014 for implementation in April 2015. "Public sector workers have been giving more and getting less. Now is the time for getting more." Seconding the Motion, John Dennis (Dumfries & Galloway) said "we can't defeat the austerity programme on our own. We have to rekindle the spirit of 30 November 2011." A campaign of industrial action, including the coordination of ballot timetables with other unions, should be organised if no satisfactory salary settlement is concluded by April 2015. Annie McCrae (Edinburgh) told delegates "winning a decent pay rise is an absolute priority for us." Winding up this debate, Charlie McKinnon (Glasgow) said: "Teachers' pay will never be at an acceptable level when our younger members are moonlighting as bar staff and taxi drivers." The Motion was passed with an overwhelming majority.



In a second debate, AGM instructed Council to organise a campaign around the 2015/16 pay negotiations to restore teachers' pay levels. The campaign would include a timetable for balloting for industrial action, including strike action, in the event of a failure to secure a satisfactory wage rise by April 2015. Hugh Donnelly (Glasgow) moved the Motion and highlighted the importance of salaries to EIS members. He warned colleagues that the EIS could face criticism from parts of the media and the general public but now was the time "to stop the rot." Kenny Fella (Renfrewshire) seconded the Motion and called for the EIS "to avoid the cycle of decline and catch-up (of salaries)."

## 2014 SNCT Package

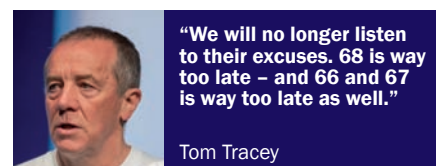
The EIS representatives on the SNCT will be asked to monitor the 2014 SNCT package relating to teacher workload, flexibility and the revised list of duties through both the SNCT and LNCTs. A report will then be compiled and the impact of the changes agreed in the package will be reported to the 2015 AGM. Vice-Convener of the Salaries Committee, Helen Connor (North Lanarkshire) argued that the EIS was concerned about the revised list of duties and the introduction of flexibility. She said: "we have a responsibility to ensure that we proactively get information from LNCTs so that the SNCT can monitor the impact of the 2014 SNCT package." Seconding the Motion, Pat Flanagan (Aberdeenshire) reminded delegates that the "managerialist approach" to education had been defeated by the EIS and that the 2014 package put an end to any further discussion on McCormac's idea of flexibility. He continued: We have to ensure that this agreement is delivered in practice."

## Conditions of Service

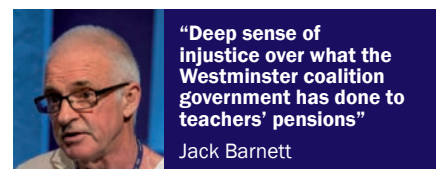


Following a successful Motion from Allan Crosbie (Edinburgh) delegates resolved to oppose any attempt by COSLA and the Scottish Government to negotiate further 'flexibility' and to tie any pay settlement in 2015 to teachers' working conditions and teacher numbers. He said "COSLA and the Scottish Government will seek to squeeze teachers further. We must stand firm against further flexibility and we must prepare our members for a battle." He concluded his speech by saying "we must not sell any more conditions and we need to re-evaluate the decision to put teacher numbers before pay." Seconding the Motion, Paula Dixon (EIS-FELA) described the experiences faced by members in the further education (FE) sector. "More flexibility may take teachers down the FE route with no upper maximum weekly sessions. Flexibility leads to a downward spiral in conditions," she warned. Helen Connor (North Lanarkshire) called on delegates to recognise the need for membership engagement and highlighted the need to mobilise members now.

## Pensions



The Annual General Meeting resolved to continue to oppose changes to teachers' pensions including the increase to the Normal Pension Age to bring it into line with the State Pension Age and any future increases in teachers' pension contributions following the success of a Motion from Council and several Local Associations. Salaries convener, Tom Tracey (Inverclyde) moved the Motion and reminded delegates that the coalition government in Westminster and the Treasury has imposed 3 pensions increases on Scotland's teachers. He then called on the Scottish Government to engage in "meaningful discussions" with the EIS as there had been little success so far. "We will no longer listen to their excuses. 68 is way too late - and 66 and 67 is way too late as well." Des Morris (East Renfrewshire) seconded the Motion and highlighted the position of 20,000 teachers who have seen their normal pension age of 60 increase to bring it into line with the state pension age which is currently 65 but which will rise to 68.



Speaking at his last AGM following many years of service to the EIS, Jack Barnett (Aberdeenshire) reminded the AGM of "... the deep sense of injustice over what the Westminster coalition government has done to teachers' pensions simply as part of the austerity programme." He outlined a bleak future where teachers could find that they are unable to work but also unable to meet the criteria for ill-health retirement. The concern is that the Scottish Government will be unwilling to commit to support measures." Other delegates supported the Motion. Charlie McKinnon (Glasgow) argued "nothing but that coalition (of trade unions) has a chance of beating this coalition government." David Thomson (Renfrewshire) said that the new retirement scheme from 2015 was not a fair deal for teachers and Phil Jackson (President and Angus) said that the Scottish Government needs to find a solution to combat the



“vindictive coalition of scoundrels in Westminster.”

The Motion was carried by an overwhelming majority. As a result, Council has been set a deadline of the end of 2014 for a satisfactory outcome to the present negotiations. If no satisfactory outcome is forthcoming, EIS members will take part in a ballot for industrial action including strike action.

## Absence as a Result of Miscarriage

The SNCT will be asked to amend the relevant sections of the SNCT Handbook of Conditions and Service to recognise that absence as a result of miscarriage should be regarded as a pregnancy related illness. The mover of the Motion, North Lanarkshire Council member Ricky Cullen, was highly critical of those Councils who refused to treat some miscarriages as a pregnancy related absence. He argued that no employee should be subjected to a formal absence review procedure as a result of any absence attributable to miscarriage. “Even HR professional bodies recommend this,” he said. He also asked Councils to reflect on the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 in this regard. Seconding the Motion, Louise Glen (North Lanarkshire) advised delegates how she had supported members at absence review meetings. She highlighted the “trauma of miscarriage” was compounded when members were instructed to attend these meetings. She told delegates that employers should treat absence attributable to miscarriage separately from their normal occupational health procedures. Pat Flanagan (Aberdeenshire) supported the Motion but advised Conference that while the SNCT Handbook outlined procedures dealing with conduct and competency, the Handbook was silent on capability procedures and that subsequent negotiations could be challenging. The Motion was approved by an overwhelming majority.

## Violent and Disruptive Pupils



Jayne Rowe (Glasgow) moved a Motion instructing Council to review and publish revised advice for members on working with violent and disruptive pupils and students, and to produce a series of posters

containing key messages to be distributed to educational establishments. Ms Rowe highlighted the lack of consistency in the use of risk assessments and Violent Incident Forms, stressing the need to promote safe working environments for teachers. Kenny Mitchell, also of Glasgow, in seconding, argued that statistics showing numbers of exclusions for violent conduct could not be trusted because many violent incidents were not being reported as a result of “fear of repercussions at all levels in education from directorates to supply teachers.” Josephine McDaid (West Dunbartonshire) said that teachers as employees of local authorities “have a right in law to be protected and safe” at work. She urged members who were victims of violent incidents to make it a police matter. The Motion was passed with an overwhelming majority.

## Zero-Hours Contracts

Commenting on the “massive increase in zero-hours contracts widely used in colleges and universities,” Charlie McKinnon (Glasgow) successfully moved a Motion instructing Council to campaign against the use of zero-hours contracts in employment in educational establishments. He added “Zero-hours contracts create a huge pool of casual labour with no employment rights such as sick pay or holiday pay. We need to be ever more vigilant on the use of zero-hours contracts.” Penny Gower (EIS-FELA) seconded the Motion and highlighted the problems created by the use of zero-hours contracts in the further and higher education sectors.

## Public Reporting by the GTCS of Decisions Taken

The EIS will discuss with the GTCS its public reporting of decisions taken by the Fitness to Teach Panel. Moving the Motion, Pat Flanagan, Convener of the Employment Relations Committee, stated that this Motion was not an attack on the General Teaching Council for Scotland. He welcomed the fact that teaching in Scotland was a self-regulating profession and that the GTCS was an independent body. He said “the quibble we have with the GTCS is that even when a member agrees to his or her removal from the GTCS Register with consent, that the GTCS puts all the evidence leading up to that decision on its website. This can include details of classroom observations and reports on individuals from senior managers. He concluded “(Currently) the GTCS goes beyond what is in the public interest and

adds unnecessary stress on our members.” The Motion was seconded by Mairi Raeburn (South Ayrshire, Vice-Convener of the Employment Relations Committee, and passed by an overwhelming majority.

## Children and Young People in Scotland Act



Renfrewshire LA Secretary Brian McGovern moved a Motion instructing Council to investigate and report on the legal and workload implications of the Named Person Service as outlined in the Children and Young People in Scotland Act 2014. He raised concern at the lack of specificity in the detail of the new legislation. “Many thousands of our members may be asked to take on a job that no one knows what it’s about,” he said, going on to point to this as “a legal minefield potentially.” East Dunbartonshire delegate Lynne Robertson seconded the Motion citing the Scottish Government’s lack of costing as a further issue. Her concerns were echoed by Kenn Bryce-Stafford (Edinburgh) who argued that the allocation of a Named Person to every child in Scotland within the terms of the Act had not been properly thought out and was hugely impractical. The Motion was carried with an overwhelming majority.

## CPD and Professional Update

“We can engage a new generation of teacher activists,” said Allan Crosbie (Edinburgh) when he successfully moved a Motion seeking EIS involvement in the devising, planning and delivery of CPD courses and Professional Learning activities aimed at all teachers and lecturers, including those in training. He continued “The EIS has been given a great opportunity to promote our values on social justice.” The Motion called for such involvement to include activities focussing on roles and work of trade unions. Bill Harris (Edinburgh) seconded the Motion and commented: “The values and beliefs of the EIS were a rich seam for professional learning.”

In a separate debate, Council will investigate and report on the staffing resource implications of supporting the potential CPD requirements identified by the professional update process following the success of a Motion from David Smith (Aberdeenshire).

# Motions

## Impact of Poverty on Education



**"If a properly funded education system is to survive, then we need wealth redistribution"**

Bill Ramsay

Bill Ramsay, Equality Convener, South Lanarkshire Local Association Secretary proposed a Motion on behalf of Council stating that the conclusions of the STUC's 'Agenda for Rebuilding Collective Prosperity' be incorporated into the EIS's ongoing campaign focussing on the impact of poverty in education. Mr Ramsay argued that the EIS needs to intervene on the debate around progressive taxation. "If a properly funded education system is to survive, then we need wealth redistribution," he said. Seconding, Annie McCrae (Edinburgh) said that the STUC paper would allow us to challenge the "repugnant" narrative which claims that "being poor is a choice." Allan Crosbie (Edinburgh) speaking in further support of the Motion, highlighted the relatively small amount of money attributed to benefit claims and benefit fraud comparative to the vast sums lost to tax evasion and tax avoidance by the wealthy and stressed that the conclusions of the STUC report go to "the heart of our strategy". The Motion was passed with an overwhelming majority.

## Misogynistic Attitudes

Annie McCrae (Edinburgh) was the mover of a Motion seeking a resolution to raise awareness of the dangers of promoting misogynistic attitudes amongst children and young people, especially through the use of social media, and to investigate and report on effective strategies used to combat misogynistic attitudes. Ms McCrae underlined the need for urgency of action in the face of a "litany of hatred and intolerance" against women as reported in both national and international news stories. She went on to argue that "very often everyday sexism goes unchallenged" and that there is a "normalisation" of sexual assault on television which influences young people's attitudes. Nicola Fisher (Glasgow) seconded the Motion expressing grave concern that social media provided both a "platform" and "permission" for misogyny, influencing boys to believe that such views are acceptable while "Girls are afraid to raise their heads above the parapet." After a show of hands the Motion was carried.

## Gender Bias and Stereotyping



**"Gender stereotyping is alive and well in the 21st century"**

Mary Matheson

"Gender stereotyping is alive and well in the 21st century," Mary Matheson (Aberdeen City) told delegates in moving a Motion instructing Council to investigate and report on gender balance in each SQA subject at each presentation level for the past five years; to raise awareness of the disadvantage caused by gender stereotyping as it affects subject choices; and also investigate and report on existing relevant research and initiatives focussing on gender stereotyping and subject choice. Alison Murphy (Edinburgh), seconding the Motion, highlighted the wealth of talent lost within particular subject disciplines as a consequence of gender stereotyping. "We need to be tackling it; we need to be tackling it now," she concluded. AGM agreed and voted overwhelmingly in support of the Motion.

## Negative Stereotyping of Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrant Workers



**"We are stronger when we fight together...do not let the politicians and the media divide us."**

Charlotte Ahmed

A Motion to campaign against the scapegoating and negative stereotyping of migrant workers, refugees and asylum seekers was overwhelmingly supported by AGM delegates. Charlie McKinnon (Glasgow) highlighted the increasingly negative portrayal in the media of these social groups and the "pernicious effect that negative coverage has" in the form of racial hatred and violence. Urging AGM to support, he said, "This Union has a proud record of speaking up for the most vulnerable groups in our society." Lesley Atkins (Glasgow) seconded the Motion saying, "We need to challenge the (biased) rhetoric" or the "lessons of history will be learned too late." Charlotte Ahmed (Glasgow) alluding to the success of the Glasgow Girls' campaign in overturning a decision to deport a Glasgow schoolgirl in 2005, said, "We are stronger when we fight together...do not let the politicians and the media divide us."

## Opposing Fascist Groups



**"The views of these people are abhorrent - we must act to protect our children from these views."**

Nicola Fisher

Charlie McKinnon (Glasgow) successfully moved for the EIS to call for members of the BNP or other fascist organisation to be debarred from teaching in Scottish schools or colleges.

"This is a very important Motion - it is right that we look at this issue at a time when far-right politicians are being elected across Europe. This Motion will also bring us in line with other major teaching unions who already have similar policies."

Nicola Fisher (Glasgow), seconding the Motion, said "We have to commit to policies of equality and social justice. The views of these people are abhorrent - we must act to protect our children from these views."

Several delegates, while agreeing with the need to combat fascist views wherever they arise, raised concerns over the terms of the Motion. They argued that the proposed ban would be difficult to administer, and that procedures were already in place via the GTCS to remove registration from any individual who expressed offensive views.

However, following a vote, the Motion was carried by a narrow margin - 121 votes to 115.

## School Design and Refurbishment



**"It was clear from previous PPP schemes that, where teachers were not consulted, we ended up with buildings that are not fit for purpose."**

Aileen Barrie

Alan Gardiner (North Lanarkshire) successfully moved a call for staff to be properly consulted at the planning stages of new school and refurbishment projects. "When are we going to be asked about what's best for our working environment? Who better to ask about what is needed than the people who will be working in these buildings?" asked Mr Gardiner.

Aileen Barrie (North Lanarkshire), seconding, the Motion, said, "It was clear from previous PPP schemes that, where teachers were not consulted, we ended up with buildings that are not fit for purpose."

Bob Colman (Highland), speaking in support, added "We need to send a message with this Motion. We have an ageing school estate so this is a very important issue."



Claire Scott (Inverclyde) spoke from personal experience of the frustration of working in poorly-considered new build schools, before the Motion was overwhelmingly approved by AGM delegates.

## Salary of General Secretary and EIS Officials, Trade Union Negotiations

A Motion from Fife Local Association, moved by Peter Quigley and seconded by David Farmer, calling for a review of the current procedures for setting the salary of the EIS General Secretary (and the EIS Officials Negotiating Group) was overwhelmingly defeated.

The current agreement links the pay of the General Secretary to the top of the Headteacher scale and matches any pay increase for the EIS officials group to the pay increase of Scottish teachers.

Finance Subcommittee Convener Alan Munro, successfully arguing against the Motion, stated, "This agreement was arrived at through a process of collective bargaining between the EIS as the employer and this group of employees – it is important that we remember that. This agreement has served us very well – when teachers do well on pay, our senior EIS employees do equally well. When teachers do badly on pay, our senior employees do equally badly. It is entirely appropriate that we link their pay awards to our own."

A related Motion, proposed by Mr Farmer and seconded by Mr Quigley, calling for a review of current bargaining procedures for all groups of EIS staff, was also overwhelmingly defeated.

## HMIE Inspections

First time AGM speaker Julie Hutchinson (Orkney) gained full support for a Motion instructing Council to investigate and report on Education Scotland's planning of inspections, the criteria for allowing educational establishments and local authorities to seek a postponement, and the mechanisms available to teachers, lecturers and local authorities for giving feedback on Education Scotland's performance. Ms Hutchinson gave strong anecdotal evidence of poorly timed HMIE inspections and the resultant negative impact on the wellbeing of teachers. "We must ensure the welfare of our members," she said. Keith Edwards (North Lanarkshire) seconded the Motion, amusing delegates with his claim that the phrase "Education Scotland and planning is an oxymoron."

## Appeals System

**"huge workload" involved in the old system of appeals.**

Alison Murphy

"We deserve our place back as the quality assurers of SQA markers," argued Allan Crosbie (Edinburgh) in seeking support for a Motion demanding the reinstatement of the pre-2013 Appeals system for Scottish exam candidates. He pointed to the "flawed logic" of scrapping the old system as well as the unsupportive mechanisms of the new one, accusing the SQA of being "self-serving and not public serving" in its new approach to appeals. Alison Thornton, Edinburgh LA Secretary, seconded the Motion while Alison Murphy, also of Edinburgh Local Association in opposing, warned delegates of the "huge workload" involved in the old system of appeals. Sonia Kodiak (Midlothian) was successful in securing a remit of the Motion to Council.

## Pupil Journey Times

**"Some children will be travelling to school by bus for up to 85 minutes each way, with resultant damage to their performance in school and their general wellbeing"**

Ingrid Smith

Pupils are "learners not commuters" said Ingrid Smith (Shetland) in moving a Motion addressing the negative impact of long journey times on pupils' health, attainment and behaviour, and calling upon the Scottish Government to introduce a national maximum time limit on daily travel times to school. Ms Smith highlighted the potential impact of school closure within her authority on pupil journey times and the likelihood that some children will be travelling to school by bus for up to 85 minutes each way, with resultant damage to their performance in school and their general wellbeing. She stressed the need for consideration to be given to such factors within school closure procedures. AGM gave its overwhelming support to the Motion, it having been formally seconded by Valerie Hughson.

## GIRFEC Initiatives

Opening the debate calling for an investigation and report on the impact of GIRFEC initiatives, Hugh Donnelly

(Glasgow) said "GIRFEC has to be monitored. We support the laudable aims but such ambitions need to be monitored, scrutinised and challenged." The wide-ranging Motion calls on Council to include in the investigation and report reference to class sizes, resources, teacher numbers and provision of support staff. In addition, there should be an assessment of the cumulative impact of budget cuts on the success of GIRFEC in delivering for all children. Mr Donnelly concluded: "Without transparent sustainability, we get it right for very few pupils. Maximum class sizes, the lack of PSAs and the lack of support for learning staff impacts on the care and welfare of pupils." The Motion was seconded by Mary Kate Milne (Glasgow). Kenn Bryce-Stafford (Edinburgh) supported the Motion but highlighted the workload of the "named person" in ensuring that the eight well-being indicators were being met. He also expressed concern about any possible change in relationships between teachers, parents and pupils arising from this approach. The Motion was passed with an overwhelming majority.

## Transition of Vulnerable Children and Young People



**"At the end of P7, they leave their base and the level of support in funding does not always follow the child."**

Sue Burns

The first Motion debated at the 168th AGM of the EIS called on Council to investigate and report on the level of resourcing which supports the transition of pupils from specialist primary provision to mainstream secondary. Moving the Motion, Sue Burns (Council and Midlothian) expressed concern "... about the level and continuity of support at the transition between primary and secondary. It takes a long time to build up self-esteem and confidence of these vulnerable children and young people. At the end of P7, they leave their base and the level of support in funding does not always follow the child." She concluded: "The vulnerable child doesn't suddenly stop needing additional support and funding." Mark Ireland (Midlothian) seconded the Motion and cited examples of pupils who had been heavily assisted in primary only to find "...that the support is stripped away when they hit secondary school." The Motion was passed after a show of hands.





MAKE  
TIME  
FOR TEACHING



The EIS is most grateful to **West Lothian Council** for arranging a number of young musicians who provided us with musical entertainment during the AGM.