

13 July 2020

To: Chief Executives of County Councils and Metropolitan Districts and Unitary Authorities in England;
Chief Executives of London Boroughs;
Chief Executives of County Councils and County Borough Councils in Wales;
Directors of Children's Services/Directors of Education of County Councils Metropolitan Districts and Unitary Authorities in England;
Directors of Children's Services/Directors of Education of London Boroughs;
Directors of Children's Services/Directors of Education of County Councils and County Borough Councils in Wales;
Members of the Soulbury Committee;
LGA Subscribers

**JOINT EDUCATION SERVICES CIRCULAR NO 216 - CONSULTATION
AND NEGOTIATION AT LOCAL LEVEL**

Dear Sir/Madam

The Soulbury Committee has been made aware that there have been claims of concern surrounding consultation with Soulbury trade unions or employees on proposals to change pay rates and the overall contractual terms and conditions of officers. These include reports of Soulbury officers being appointed to posts on salaries lower than the minimum point in the Soulbury agreement and Trainee Educational Psychologists being paid bursaries rather than nationally agreed salaries.

In relation to this we would ask you to note the Soulbury Report national agreement (The 'Blue Book') which recommends full recognition by local authorities of the professional associations represented on the Soulbury Committee, including "regular consultation with representatives on all questions affecting their conditions of service" (para 11.1).

Both Sides of the Soulbury Committee are in agreement that it is important that employers negotiate with all of the recognised Soulbury trade unions (National Education Union, Prospect and the Association of Education Psychologists) on any contractual changes and would encourage you not to confine consultation to those Trade Unions recognised in respect of the main local government employee groups. Should there be a failure to agree, the correct escalation route will be to the Soulbury Committee.

We would also advise that local authorities work to establish or maintain existing Soulbury consultation groups to ensure that these parts of the workforce are included in all discussions. In order to support consultations, we would advise that you allow Soulbury employees who are Trade Unions representatives' time off and facilities for Trade Union duties and activities.

We believe that it is not appropriate for any Soulbury Officer to be paid below the minimum point for the scale on which they are employed. Additionally, we would remind local authorities that the Soulbury Report includes a salary scale for Trainee Educational Psychologists. We would expect that such individuals would normally be paid on this scale rather than through a bursary.

Finally, where local authorities have already implemented changes which may have a disproportionate impact on Soulbury officers and there is evidence that Soulbury officer representatives were not part of the original consultation process, the Soulbury Committee recommends that authorities should consider the impact of these changes upon Soulbury officers and where appropriate consult their representatives.

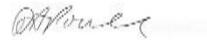
In order to support the consultation process we would encourage that local authorities contact the appropriate Trade Union.

Yours sincerely



David Algie
Employers' Side Assistant Secretary

Employers' Side Secretary: Sarah Ward
Local Government Association, 18 Smith Square, London,
SW1P 3HZ



David Powell
Officers' Side Secretary

Officers' Side Secretary: David Powell
National Education Union, Hamilton House,
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