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The Scottish Educational Journal



Sights and sounds from the AGM

**Special Focus:**  
The key news, debates  
and speeches from Perth



Nicola Fisher succeeds Margaret Smith as EIS President

# Pay, Workload and Defending Comprehensive Education Dominate AGM Debate

It was a welcome return to Perth for delegates as they gathered for the 171st EIS Annual General Meeting. This year's AGM opened on the same day that people across the country headed to the polls to vote in the general election with members aware that both events would have an impact on education in the years ahead. Key themes running throughout this year's debate included raising attainment, staff shortages, supporting high-quality comprehensive education and teachers' pay and conditions. With many parts of the country experiencing a "staffing crisis" EIS members are now saying that "enough is enough", and that action needs to be taken to ensure teaching remains an attractive career. Schools need to be given additional resources and funding to allow teachers to teach along with a fair pay settlement being delivered to the profession. Following a decade of real-terms pay erosion, enhancing teachers' salaries is an issue that Scotland's local authorities and the Scottish Government must commit to addressing. This year's AGM passed Motions calling for industrial action up to and including strike action if pay talks stagnate which highlights the growing frustration of teachers on the subject of pay. In this special edition of the SEJ, you can read more about some of the key issues from this year's AGM. For more coverage, including a full round-up of all Motions and a copy of keynote speeches, visit [www.eis.org.uk/AGM](http://www.eis.org.uk/AGM)

## Motions

### Salaries Campaign



"With the slashing of salary levels, is it any wonder schools are finding it difficult to recruit teachers?"

Mick Dolan

Delegates at the AGM formulated strategies to develop a campaign on salaries with the aim of restoring members' pay, in real terms, to that established by the 2001 agreement "A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century." In a Motion, moved by Des Morris (East Renfrewshire) and seconded by Steven Caniffi (East Renfrewshire), the AGM called on Council to issue information to members on how far members' salaries had declined in real terms. Mr Morris said, "We can't go on reacting every year to paltry pay offers. Politicians are presiding over a fall in our salaries and a 'race to the bottom' in terms of both public sector morale and pay." Mr Caniffi, speaking at his last AGM after many years of service to the EIS, added that while the top of the main grade scale had risen by 24% since the 2001 agreement, RPI had increased by 46%. "By any measure, salaries are at historically low levels," he said.

These themes were continued in a second Motion which instructed Council to prepare a campaign to restore salaries to the values of the "McCrone settlement", based on inflation figures, and to negotiate on this basis for next year's (2018) pay settlement. If agreement could not be reached, industrial action should follow. Moving the Motion, Mick Dolan (West Dunbartonshire) told delegates that

teachers at the top of the main grade scale should be earning £42,343 and not the current salary of £35,763. He said, "With the slashing of salary levels, is it any wonder schools are finding it difficult to recruit teachers?" Jim Halfpenny seconded the Motion and said, "If the other negotiators do not listen to the force of our argument then they must feel the argument of our force." Incoming Salaries Convener, Helen Connor (North Lanarkshire) agreed and said, "The campaign for 2018-19 has to start in August 2017. Our message is clear. We will be out on industrial action if we don't get action on pay." Both Motions passed with overwhelming majorities and established EIS policy that a failure to reach an agreement on a restorative pay claim will result in a ballot of members, to begin a campaign of industrial action including strike action, from the start of the academic year in 2018-19.

Mr P @greenpatrols  
#EISAGM17 Maingrade 6 teacher pay increased 24%..RPI up almost 50% since end of McCrone 2003..let's get serious about salary campaigning



### Reduction in Class Contact Time



"If the Scottish Government are serious about raising attainment... they need to look at how education is delivered"

David Baxter

Following a lengthy debate, the AGM instructed Council to campaign to reduce maximum class contact time to the OECD average of 17.5 hours. Moving the Motion, David Baxter (Dundee) called for the reduction as a means of controlling teacher workload, improving the conditions for pupil learning and closing the attainment gap. He said, "If the Scottish Government are serious about raising attainment and closing the attainment gap, they need to look at how education is delivered." Speaking at his last AGM after many years of service to the EIS, Tom Tracey (Inverclyde), Convener of the Salaries Committee agreed saying, "Reductions in class contact time will enable teacher development." However, not all delegates agreed with these arguments. Helen Connor (North Lanarkshire) and incoming Convener of the Salaries Committee, urged Conference to think twice about passing the Motion which she described as "aspirational." "We have competing priorities and it is not a priority to achieve this," she said, adding, "It's not realistic to look at reducing class contact time when we don't have teachers." Elsie Aitken (West Lothian) warned that the EIS could "lose credibility" if the Motion was passed. However, Pam Currie (EIS-FELA) responded by saying, "We're a trade union. If we are not aspirational for our members, no one else will be." The Motion passed with a large majority.

### Governance Review and the SNCT



"Regional Boards without the SNCT are a major worry"

Margaret Johnston

"Regional Boards without the SNCT are a major worry. We must examine any alternatives which may come forward [from the Governance Review] and act to protect the LNCTs and the SNCT." These were the key points put forward by Margaret Johnston (Fife) as she successfully moved

a Motion calling for industrial action, including strike action, if the role of the SNCT is undermined as a result of the Governance Review of Scottish Education. Supporting the Motion, Helen Connor (North Lanarkshire) warned the Scottish Government that the EIS will never give up its ability to bargain collectively on behalf of its members. She added, "Regarding our conditions of service, the EIS will not go down the road where we end up negotiating at school level. We will never leave our members at the mercy of bullying Headteachers."

## Asbestos in Schools

The EIS will campaign for all educational establishments to be asbestos free by 2020, as the result of a successful Motion from East Dunbartonshire local association. Many schools across Scotland, particularly those built in the mid 20th Century, contain asbestos which was commonly used in the construction of public buildings at the time. Delegates expressed concern that, due to cuts to maintenance budgets, the risks of asbestos exposure to pupils and teachers were increasing and that action should be taken to remove asbestos from all establishments as soon as possible.

## Increases in Normal Pension Age (NPA)

The AGM reaffirmed its opposition to the increases in the retiral age for teachers from age 60 to ages 65 to 68 following the success of a Motion from Des Morris (East Renfrewshire) which was seconded by Michael Dunn (South Lanarkshire). Singled out for criticism was HM Treasury's decision to conscript members from the NPA 60 Scheme to a scheme which awards benefits only from ages 65 to 68.

## Proposals for changes to the SNCT Handbook



teachers suffering from cancer should have the same sickness allowance as someone suffering from respiratory tuberculosis

Neil Anderson

The SNCT Handbook of Conditions of Service sets out the pay and conditions of service for teachers and associated professionals employed by Scottish Councils. The SNCT will be asked to consider incorporating relevant wording

in part 2 section 6 of the SNCT Handbook of Conditions of Service to recognise that teachers suffering from cancer should have the same sickness allowance as someone suffering from respiratory tuberculosis following the success of a Motion proposed by Neil Anderson (Glasgow) and seconded by Jayne Rowe (Glasgow). The SNCT will also be asked to review 'Accelerated Incremental Progression' or AIP which, according to the mover of the Motion, Tom Tracey (Inverclyde), "was not being applied in any way." Finally, EIS Reps on the SNCT will be asked to seek improvements in the current arrangements for Ordinary Paternity Leave as outlined in the SNCT Handbook Section 7 – Family Leave. Moving the Motion, Alison Thornton (Edinburgh) highlighted the fact that, "Currently, there can only be one period of ordinary paternity leave. Where an employee elects to take 2 weeks' leave, these must be consecutive. This Motion seeks to remove the phrase 'must be consecutive'." The Motion passed with an overwhelming majority.

## Work-related Stress



"The Motion asks for authorities to report on stress. We need to have the numbers and we need to monitor the trends"

Isaac McCleary

"Ever increasing workload and multi-layered teaching, along with the removal of classroom support assistants all add to teacher stress and unreasonable pressures." That was the claim made by Isaac McCleary (North Lanarkshire) who moved a Motion calling for employers to record and report work-related stress as a discrete reason for absence from work. He continued, "The Motion asks for authorities to report on stress. We need to have the numbers and we need to monitor the trends." Seconding the Motion, Alan Gardiner (North Lanarkshire) argued that work-related stress was part of the wider issue of how employers deal with mental illness claiming that there was "additional stigma" attached to employees identified as experiencing work-related stress. Delegates passed the Motion with a very large majority.

## Absence Review Procedures – Special Situations



"local representatives need specific advice on what to do in "one-off" situations"

Jayne Rowe

A Motion calling for Council to give advice to Local Association Secretaries and Branch Secretaries to ensure that one-off surgical procedures are exempt from absence review procedures was passed by an overwhelming majority. Jayne Rowe (Glasgow) moved the Motion saying that local representatives needed specific advice on what to do in "one-off" situations. The AGM also backed a Motion which sought improvements to absence review policies for teachers suffering from myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME/CFS). Shauna Richardson (Glasgow) moved the Motion and, from her personal experience, highlighted the persistent fatigue and other symptoms associated with myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME/CFS).

## Zero-tolerance of Violence in Educational Workplaces



"The fall in teacher numbers, educational psychologists and pupil support staff has made this situation worse"

Carolyn Ritchie

"It is time for the EIS to take a much more vocal line on violence in the workplace." Those words, which received a long round of applause from the floor, came from AGM delegate Carolyn Ritchie (Glasgow) when she moved a Motion instructing Council to conduct a major campaign to promote zero tolerance of violence in educational workplaces. She claimed that in 2014 there were 20 assaults in every school day in Scotland. Ms Ritchie continued, "The fall in teacher numbers, educational psychologists and pupil support staff have made this situation worse in the classrooms. Our existing advice is fine but we need to do more." Moira Macdonald (Glasgow) seconded the Motion and gave examples where EIS members had been abused, threatened or assaulted. David Gibson (Dundee) said, "Being subject to a verbal assault is definitely not part of my job." The Motion passed with an overwhelming majority.

## Emergency Motion



“unscrupulous approach to the deployment of non-subject specialists”

**Murray Swan**

Mover Susan Quinn (Glasgow) and Seconder Helen Connor (North Lanarkshire), having collaborated successfully to bring an emergency Motion to AGM, made strong speeches condemning the recent decision of Scottish Government to tender for new approaches to ITE which would bypass universities, and called on Council to campaign against any proposals which would reduce the current balance between academic and practical placements. Ms Quinn made clear that while the EIS is not opposed to alternative pathways into teaching, that in the face of any moves to allow the delivery of initial teacher education by organisations such as Teach First, “We would challenge until we won.” She vehemently challenged the notion that against the backdrop of significant challenge to cover initial teacher education course content within one year, that it was “absurd” to countenance the possibility of reducing the input by universities to five weeks as per the Teach First model of delivery. Ms Connor was equally forceful in her rejection of such an approach, pointing the finger of blame at the Scottish Government’s lack of foresight in relation to workforce planning, resulting in the teacher shortage which has prompted the consideration of such standard alternative routes. Khadija Mohammed (EIS-ULA) supported the Motion from the perspective of a teacher educator. She said that, “The future of Scottish education rests on having teachers who have the cutting edge and who can create the context for learning...” not on “reducing professionalism to a mere list of teaching tips and ‘do’s and don’ts’.” First time delegate Murray Swan (Fife) from first-hand experience of Teach First, warned of its unscrupulous approach to the deployment of non-subject specialists. AGM delegates were fully convinced of the arguments put by the speakers and gave complete backing to the Motion.

## Comprehensive Education



“need to protect our education system from the threat of marketisation”

**Sonia Kordiak**

On behalf of Council, Education Convener Susan Quinn, sought the backing of AGM to reaffirm its commitment to comprehensive

education, its absolute rejection of marketisation approaches within school education, and the resolve to galvanise its campaign for adequate resourcing to ensure that the aspirations of the comprehensive system are fully realised. Delegates applauded Ms Quinn’s firm rejection of the models of education in England: “We don’t need academies, we don’t need free schools, and we don’t require grammar schools!” Rather, she asserted, if we wish to raise attainment for all and close the gap between the richest and poorest, we need to defend and campaign for adequate resourcing of the “comprehensive system that for the past fifty years, we’ve been duly proud of.” Education Committee Vice Convener, Sonia Kordiak, seconded the Motion, focusing her speech on the need to protect our education system from the threat of marketisation, particularly in the context of a Conservative Party in Scotland emboldened by its general election gains. Irvine Tait (Shetland) cited comprehensive education as one of the key “achievements of the British labour movement alongside the NHS and public housing” and emphasised the need to “defend it from the reckless experimentation that we see south of the border.” AGM gave its unanimous support for the Motion.

## Poverty and Education



Highlighted the barriers that families on low incomes face in meeting the costs associated with children attending school

**Caroline Yates**

Caroline Yates of West Dunbartonshire and Equality Committee Vice Convener last session, successfully moved a Motion from Council seeking the resolve of AGM to continue to highlight the negative impact of poverty on children’s and young people’s educational experiences, and the barriers that families on low incomes face in meeting the costs associated with children attending school. The Motion also called for AGM to publicly reaffirm its commitment to the universal provision of free school meals; to lobby the Scottish Government to ensure adequacy and consistency in the level of clothing grants across local authorities; to lobby local authorities to maximise access to clothing grant entitlements and to ensure that school uniform requirements are universally affordable. Ms Yates stressed the necessity of such action in view of children coming to school with meagre packed lunches, clothing grants amounting to the paltry sum of £20 in some local authorities and

the absurdity of requirements for braiding and school logos on items of uniform that put costs beyond the reach of many families. Incoming President Nicola Fisher seconded the Motion, reminding delegates that hundreds of children would have gone to school that day “with nothing to eat, clothes that don’t fit and worrying about school trips that cost money that they don’t have.”

## SQA Workload



“All the SQA had to do was remove the units; all the other changes...have no credibility among teachers”

**Maria Devoy**

Edinburgh delegate Maria Devoy gained the full support of AGM for a Motion calling on Council to investigate and report on workload issues arising from the new qualification assessment arrangements and changes to course statements issued by the SQA in relation to the removal of mandatory unit assessments. The Motion sought coverage of the issues of class sizes, practical and non-practical subjects, and multi-level classes. Ms Devoy was clear in terms of the changes that, “All the SQA had to do was remove the units; all the other changes...have no credibility among teachers.” In seconding, Colin Glover (North Lanarkshire) stated, “Rather than reduce workload, the SQA are just shifting it around.”

## SQA & Industrial Action



“the recent actions of the SQA have resulted in an unacceptable increase in workload”

**David Thomson**

Renfrewshire’s Kenny Fella successfully moved a Motion calling upon Council to investigate and monitor new National Qualification course design and assessment, and if judged that the changes had resulted in increased workload, then members to be balloted on the reinstatement of the suspended industrial action. Mr Fella put it to delegates that the Deputy First Minister’s promise to alleviate teachers’ workload burden had yet to come to fruition and that the actions of the SQA had been prohibitive to this. David Thomson, also of Renfrewshire Local Association, seconded the Motion, reiterating the view that the recent actions of the SQA have resulted in an unacceptable increase in the workload of Secondary teachers.

## Fit for Purpose Qualifications



“What kind of year have you had?”

Susan Talboys

On behalf of Aberdeen Local Association, David Innes moved a Motion calling on Council to campaign for the SQA to engage fully with the teaching profession to provide a “fit for purpose” qualifications system which reduces workload for pupils and teachers, students and lecturers. Mr Innes was critical both of the nature of the changes introduced, in particular the significant increase in the duration of exams in some subjects, the level of change applied to some courses and the late release of the details. Isman Ahmad (Aberdeen) seconded the Motion, suggesting that the actions of the SQA were characterised by an “element of vindictiveness and retaliation for our campaign to remove unit assessments.” Susan Talboys (Aberdeen) in supporting the Motion, lightened the mood but was heavy in her criticism of the SQA. Delivering an excellent parody of the late Ricky Fulton’s Reverend I.M. Jolly, she asked delegates with the Reverend’s characteristic despondency, “What kind of year have you had?” before condemning Senior Phase assessment as “a dog’s breakfast” and urging, “SQA, we are the experts - listen to us!” Delegates demonstrated their deep dissatisfaction with the SQA’s approach to Senior Phase qualification design by voting in unanimous favour of the Motion.

## Teachers in Early Years



“Nursery education is not merely a watered down Primary 1”

Claire Scott

On behalf of Aberdeen Local Association, Neil Duncan moved a Motion that the EIS raise awareness of the negative impact of the removal of GTCS qualified teachers from early learning and childcare settings, and instructed Council to campaign rigorously to make it a statutory requirement to have a qualified teacher as the leading professional in every nursery class. Mr Duncan highlighted the variance across local authorities in their commitments to providing children in nurseries with access to a teacher. Dumfries and Galloway delegate Alan McClure seconded the Motion. “The learning journey,” he said, “should be led

by people who know the destination.” Supporting, Inverclyde’s Claire Scott spoke passionately on the importance of nursery education led by teachers: “Nursery education is not merely a watered down Primary 1; it’s a unique learning experience in its own right.”

## Funding languages in Primary



“Nowadays we live in a society that needs a global mindset”

Sonia Perez Coughlan

A call to the Scottish Government to release adequate funding for the completion of 1 + 2 Languages training for primary teachers beyond 2020 was made in a Motion moved by Andrew O’Halloran on behalf of Dumfries and Galloway Local Association. Mr O’Halloran said that as an initiative that adds significantly to the distinctiveness of Scottish education, Modern Languages 1 + 2, from a Scottish Government perspective, is a “flagship policy which they can’t really afford to fail.” First time AGM delegate Sonia Perez Coughlan (East Ayrshire) seconded the Motion, stressing the importance of maintaining funding: “Nowadays we live in a society that needs a global mindset and that requires knowledge of different cultures and languages.” The Motion received the full agreement of AGM.

## Resourcing Professional Learning



Call for teachers to have access to purposeful CLPL opportunities that are properly planned and resourced.

Lorraine McBride

Megan McCrossan (North Ayrshire Local Association) succeeded in winning the wholehearted support of delegates for a Motion calling for teachers to have access to purposeful CLPL opportunities that are properly planned and resourced. Ms McCrossan argued that such well-resourced provision was necessary in light of the requirement within Professional Update for teachers not only to record the professional learning that they have undertaken but to include meaningful evaluation of its impact. North Lanarkshire’s Lorraine McBride formally seconded the Motion before delegates voted fully in favour.

## Standardised Testing opposition



The risk posed by national standardised assessment outweighs the benefit

Olivia Crook

AGM delegates were united in their support for a Motion moved by East Renfrewshire delegate Olivia Crook, which stated that in the event of the implementation of national standardised testing which the EIS determines as detrimental to learning and teaching in schools, all primary and secondary members will be balloted on a boycott of the administration and reporting of the results. Ms Crook laid out a series of concerns that educators have about standardised assessment and concluded that the risk posed by national standardised assessment outweighs the benefit. Sharon Kelly (East Renfrewshire) in seconding the Motion added, “Standardised assessments are not going to close the attainment gap; we need more teachers and smaller classes.” First time delegate Adela Mansur (Edinburgh) said in supporting the Motion, “The government needs to stop meddling in matters of the classroom.” Every delegate in the room agreed and the Motion was carried.

## Poverty and the attainment gap



“How can you attain if you can’t afford to go to school?”

Helen Connor

Kenny Fella (Renfrewshire) won the support of AGM for a Motion instructing Council to continue to highlight the impact of poverty on a child’s educational experience. He commended the long-term commitment of the EIS to this agenda and the recent work of the Equality Committee on the campaign, including the Face Up to Child Poverty booklet and the “I, Daniel Blake” film screenings, but reminded delegates of the limited capacity of education on its own to eradicate poverty. Incoming Salaries Convener Helen Connor seconded the Motion, underscoring the link between poverty and attainment. “How can you attain if you can’t afford to go to school?”

# Facing the Challenge

Outgoing EIS President Margaret Smith used her keynote AGM speech to address the big issues facing education – including the impact of poverty on education, cuts to budgets and the need for unions to organise to protect education provision and the rights of teachers and lecturers.



## The political picture

I am honoured and delighted to have served as EIS President this year and hope that I have represented you well.

My year as National President has passed very quickly and most of that due to the busy schedule unfolding over the year.

One event, however, has dominated the headlines since we last gathered in Dundee and that is of course Brexit and its consequences.

Health and safety protections and our hard won employment rights protections will be at risk during these Brexit negotiations. While the previous government set out its intention in a White Paper to transfer all existing health and safety protections from EU law to UK law, there are no guarantees that this will actually happen.

There must be firm commitments written into any final agreement to safeguard EU standards for workplace health and safety in the UK.

There also has to be a cast iron guarantee to transfer current protections from EU law to UK law.

In addition, the Government must very quickly end the uncertainty for certain workers by confirming that it will give current EU migrants a right to remain in the UK after Brexit.

These colleagues work beside us on a daily basis in our nurseries, our schools, our colleges and our universities. The current uncertainty is hugely worrying for these EIS members and their families who have made Scotland their home.

A decision on their futures must be made swiftly and these members should not be used as bargaining chips in the forthcoming discussions.

The year also involves meetings with Education spokespeople from all political parties in Scottish Government.

They certainly gave us time and listened to what we said but whether or not they heard what we were saying is another matter.

I just wished they would give teachers

time to embed changes before more changes are made – Education is not a football to be kicked around the playground at Holyrood – our pupils and students matter to us. We would not be in the profession if they didn't matter to us.

We were also represented at all Political Party conferences – either holding lunchtime fringes or through our stalls in their exhibitors areas.

These events are important for the Institute because it is through participating in them that we hear views from their activists about Scottish Education and what matters to them. Also, more importantly, we take the opportunity to express to politicians what matters to teachers in the classroom.

The Institute responded to the Governance Review – submitting a sizeable document as expected. It was felt that, at the time of submission the Government's Consultation Document was a very open one – it was challenging but suggested that nothing had been pre-determined, there were no specific proposals to which we could directly respond.

It was, and remains our view, that this was an initial consultation and once more specific proposals emerge, we hope that there will be scope for future, more detailed dialogue.

## Working in Union

The Institute plays a role in the TUC and this year sent a sizeable delegation to Brighton and put two Motions to congress, both were well received by the delegates.

We also have a presence on STUC with three members on Council – a great honour for 2016-17 both for the Institute and on a personal level was that our own Helen Connor was elected as President and I believe her classroom skills and class management skills were well used at congress in Aviemore!

I have been honoured to represent the EIS at other Teacher Trade Union conferences – at Stirling, Newcastle County Down, Belfast, Crieff, Liverpool and Cardiff.

Common themes emerge at the conferences – pay, conditions of service, teacher shortages, trust in the profession, workload and pensions.

At the ETUCE conference similar themes emerged and were discussed by our colleagues across Europe.

As President, I have been able to attend all committees and sub committees of the Institute and see the vast amount of work undertaken by each.

This work is, of course, generated by the AGM resolutions, so what we decide over the next three days informs the work of the Institute for next session.

I have also attended as many of the ULA and FELA Executive meetings as I could and had the honour of speaking at their Annual Conferences.

Through my attendance at these meetings I feel that I have gained so much insight into the workings of the Self - Governing Associations and into the problems they are facing. Part time contracts, zero hours contracts, class contact, preparation and marking time, which University lecturers can and cannot do research – to name but a few.

This session FELA lecturers have been very much in the news and rightly so.

Last year they struck a deal with the employers and, up to now, the pay element which should have been paid out on 1st April has still not been paid out.

The FELA negotiators were tireless and gave every opportunity to management to Honour the Deal.

Students were angry and backed their lecturers. The Executive Committee and Council gave their full backing to the dispute, and Local Associations sent messages of support.

There were a number of Rallies across the country, some of which I was able to attend. They were noisy, well attended and I think that Scottish Politicians in Holyrood, the general public and tourists were under no illusion that the lecturers are united in their cause.

In the early hours of Friday 19th May

the negotiators had failed to agree but agreed to meet again at 10am, all day the negotiations went on and at about 5pm, whilst at the SSTA Congress in Crieff, a message came through saying that a deal had been struck.

A very noisy, well attended rally was held in George Square, Glasgow, on 20th May. It had a very different mood from the previous Rallies – smiles all around - even smiles from the tired worn out face of the negotiators.

FELA have certainly held the banners high, made their voices heard and have set down markers for any dispute within the Institute and indeed for the wider trade union movement.

## Promoting Activism

We as activists, School Reps and members of the EIS must help to inform our members and help them to understand the impact the Trade Union Act, brought in this year, will have on our ballots and Trade Union activities – we need to ensure very high numbers take part in ballots and of that high number there must be a high percentage voting in favour of the action.

It won't be an easy task, but those of us as Local Association Secretaries, and more importantly, those of you who have everyday face to face contact with members will need to explain the importance of taking part in a ballot - otherwise any action required will just not happen – members will then be asking, "What are the Union doing about this?" Colleagues - We are the Union.

Not the General Secretary - Not the staff in Moray Place – Us – the paying members.

Since I became the EIS President last June, we have launched some extremely useful resources for LNCTs and schools.

Sustain the Ambition was launched at the Headteachers' conference in Edinburgh – an independent and comprehensive research project by Professor Aline Wendy Dunlop at Strathclyde University, funded by the EIS, it confirms the importance of maintaining a registered teacher workforce in all pre-school settings.

Employing the skills and leadership of qualified teachers is and always has been the best way to ensure that children's educational experience is of the best quality and early exposure to a quality learning experience has many benefits many of which last long term.

We are all aware that the Curriculum for Excellence is, and should be a seamless curricular model spanning the age range of 3 – 18 and therefore our youngest learners should receive quality teacher involvement which enhances their learning experiences and provides continuity into school.

Early interventions are essential building blocks which help to minimise the impact of poverty on our youngest learners' educational outcomes both in Early Years and beyond.

This research is of great importance and raises awareness to all EIS members of the valuable work and unique contribution made by Nursery teachers in all Pre school settings across Scotland.

I am a Nursery teacher with over 25 years experience in pre-school - I am extremely passionate about early learning through play, by providing appropriate activities for the age and stage of the children, by following the childrens' interests – it is not a watered down P1.

The Myths of Immigration booklets were launched at Holyrood and have been extremely well received by schools. Much to my delight, not long after the launch date, when visiting a local Primary school, I saw a well - thumbed booklet on a staffroom table.

At the recent BME engagement event the booklets were the subject of one of the workshops. In schools we need to be using these booklets with our pupils to tackle the myths of immigration, break down barriers and give staff the confidence to tackle racist remarks made to staff and pupils alike.

Our BME colleagues cannot and should not accept comments directed to them as part of life, accepted as the norm – we need to eradicate this abuse from our schools, our communities and society as a whole.

## Protecting the future

We need to work with Initial Teacher Education to ensure that students, as part of their courses, receive Equalities training and that staff in schools receive training on a regular basis and indeed we will be addressing this as we move through our debates over the next three days.

My first duty as President was to chair the launch of Get it Right for Girls. It was a great honour and privilege to do this at the Glasgow Women's Library – a most appropriate venue.

This booklet gives us a resource to use in schools, to use as a starting point in discussions at branch level, raise emerging issues with management, review school policies and practice, gives us confidence and advice to tackle misogynistic attitudes and language which surrounds us daily through songs, adverts and comments.

Let's be clear colleagues, - misogyny has no place in society, in our schools or in the lives of our young people and by getting it right for girls we will hopefully get it right for boys and get it right for the whole of our society.

Clearly the launch of Get it right for Girls has highlighted some statistics which show that in public life there is a clear under representation of women – as an example only 29% of MPs and fewer than 35% of MSPs in Scotland are female.

In the teaching profession in 2015, according to the teacher census Primary teachers of all grades - 91% were female with 9% male, whilst in Secondary teachers all grades 63% female to 37% male.

However, the data on promoted posts did not reflect this proportionately – HT in Primary were 87% female to 13% male and in secondary there was a 40% to 60% in favour of male Headteachers.

## The Big Challenges

We are a caring profession – We care about the quality of our education system. We care about standards of teachers entering the profession. We care about the quality of the lessons we plan and deliver on a daily basis.

We care about the outcomes for our learners of all ages. We care about the families we work with and the communities in which we work. We care about wee Johnny or Mary coming into school late on a daily basis, hungry and tired, without a pencil, no homework done.

We care about the attainment gap. We care about poverty and the inequalities of opportunity.

Some of these are societal issues which we as a profession are unable to fix but we as a profession are blamed for. The extra money given to schools is welcome but is it going to close the gaps which exist?

Are Standardised Assessments going to close the attainment gap? If we were listened to – really listened to and our ideas put into action – investment in Nursery teachers in all Nursery classes, smaller class sizes throughout the school, more teachers and more support for learning assistants would certainly go a long way to help close the attainment gap.

- Extracted from the President's AGM address. See [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk) for a complete text.

# AGM Bits and Pieces

## Named Person

The EIS will investigate and report on the administrative implications of the Named Persons Act, as a result of a successful Motion from David Farmer (Fife) which was seconded by Paul Jeffrey.

“We are currently attempting to tackle bureaucracy but the Named Persons Act is extremely bureaucratic,” said Mr Farmer.

## Budget allocations & transparency

Ricky Cullen (mover) and Alan Gardiner (seconder) successfully called for the EIS to campaign that all budgets allocated to publicly funded education establishments are administered in a fair and transparent manner, and are subject to scrutiny and accountability via local democratic structures.

## SNCT Handbook – Practical Subjects

By an overwhelming majority, delegates voted for a review and update to the list of practical subjects in the SNCT handbook (Appendix 2.9) in light of new qualifications being offered by the SQA in Scottish secondary schools. The successful Motion was moved by Colin Finlay (Falkirk) and seconded by Kate MacDonald (Western Isles).

## School Finance Committees and the Pupil Equity Fund

Ricky Cullen (Council and North Lanarkshire) moved and Lorraine McBride (Council and North Lanarkshire) seconded a successful Motion calling for there to be a school finance committee in each school to oversee devolved school budgets, including direct funding and Attainment Challenge/Pupil Equity Fund monies. Such committees should include staff and trade union representation.





## Fringe Events & Visiting Speakers

Susan Flocken, Director of the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) addressed AGM during its opening session, replying to the welcome to Kindred Organisations where she highlighted the importance of unions working together internationally to protect education provision.

Three Fringe Events were held on the Friday lunchtime of the AGM. The first was a 'Meet the General Secretary' event, where delegates also had the chance to discuss EIS priorities for the year ahead. The second was on the theme of EIS Organising, where delegates discussed how to make the EIS a more effective campaigning union. The third, and largest, was the Equality Fringe which featured Dan Montgomery, Vice President of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) who spoke on the Equality Impact of the Trump Administration in the USA.

Mr Montgomery also addressed the AGM on Friday afternoon where, in addition to his thoughts on the impact of Trump, he also addressed wider common themes for global education including delivering equality for all in the face of cuts to staffing and budgets, and the fight to protect state education from creeping privatisation and ideologically-driven political attack.



## New Fellows of the Institute honoured



**New Fellows of the Institute:** **1 Alison Thornton**, Edinburgh Local Association Secretary, Vice President Elect  
**2 Jayne Rowe**, Seconded Development Officer, Education Services **3 Joan Lennon**, Teacher, St Mark's Primary School  
**4 Elsie Aitken**, Former Head Teacher, Longridge Primary School **5 Katrina Bowes**, Chief Executive, Tapestry  
**Not Pictured: Professor Henry Maitles**, University Lecturer and Assistant Dean of the School of Education, University of the West of Scotland  
**6 Norma Anne Watson**, Convener of the Board of Examiners **7 Margaret Smith**, EIS President **8 Larry Flanagan**, EIS General Secretary

# Education to the Fore

General Secretary Larry Flanagan used his annual address to highlight the high profile of education in recent political campaigns, to call for further action to address teacher workload and for the delivery of fair improvements in pay for all of Scotland's teachers.



## General Election

From an EIS viewpoint, perhaps a significant aspect of the past few weeks, has been the extent which Scottish Education, a wholly devolved matter, has been so centre stage in the political discourse.

This is linked, clearly, to the profile and reputation of the SNP as the party of Government here in Scotland – which led, in my view, to Scottish Education becoming a political football. Unfortunately, footballs get kicked a lot.

I've made the point previously that the non-party-political stance of the EIS leaves us free to criticise politicians constructively when it is appropriate to do so, to openly challenge when it is required, and to agree and collaborate where possible.

It is hugely disappointing that a false narrative of failure has developed around Scottish Education, which belies the good work being done in our schools, day in and day out, which ignores the successes which are being achieved, such as record SQA qualifications, and which does such a disservice to the efforts not only of teachers but of pupils and their families also, in the pursuit of effective learning and teaching.

These judgements are often made on the back of selective and misleading readings of "data."

The idea, for example, that 25% of pupils leave primary school unable to read or write, a notion I heard repeatedly in the election, is simply not true.

The SSLN survey showed 88% of pupils performing well or better in reading – that's a fantastic figure.

The writing figure at 65% isn't as strong, and that is something to be investigated, but a further 29% are working within the level – to describe such pupils as illiterate – or failing to meet the standards – is to

denigrate their achievements in order to score political points – that is shameful.

Only 6% of pupils in P7 were outside Level 2 – which given the number of pupils with EAL and SEN needs in our schools, given the impact of poverty on learning, is a good news story.

96% of pupils agree with the statement, "I want to do well in my learning"; which is what keeps us going as teachers. Stop talking down our pupils.

We also had, earlier in this session, the PISA results. PISA is much more than the headline statistics and I don't reject the data out of hand. But the political hype and subsequent analysis is predictably intense and shallow at the same time.

There is a dip, out of sequence with previous trends, in Scotland's performance. The challenge is to understand why? What variables were in play?

When you consider that in 2015, when

these tests were taken, the cohort involved were in the middle of the assessment tsunami which led the EIS to take industrial action, had, in March, just completed the

unit assessment treadmill and then went straight in to a new online assessment tool without any practice or familiarisation. It seems to me that the students were up against it from the get go.

So, there was a dip, captured by the snap shot taken.

Those same pupils went on to record the second-best set of SQA results, ever – so perhaps some context and circumspection is required before politicians thunder on about falling standards.

Clearly, there are challenges in our system – rising class sizes, cuts in support, and excessive workload don't make it easy for teachers to respond to

those challenges; nor does the fact that more pupils than ever, 1 in 4 in modern Scotland, face poverty in their lives with the inevitable hurdles that creates for educational attainment.

But the EIS makes no apology for saying we have a good education system in this country. Scotland's teachers are delivering and they deserve better support from the political class than we have seen recently.

## Teacher Pay

That support needs to extend into ensuring that teaching is seen as an attractive career, with appropriate pay reward and acceptable working conditions.

We attacked COSLA earlier in the week for failing to field a team to negotiate with us; we have now been offered a meeting later this month to take things forward.

But as our Salaries Convener Tom Tracey said yesterday, the 1% public sector pay cap offer has been rejected. With inflation rising, and pension and national insurance contribution increases now biting, 1% just won't cut it.

Debates at this AGM have made it clear that a significant battle is looming on this issue.

But if I could cite the example of EIS-FELA in their recent dispute, a pay campaign will require determination and resolve if it is to be carried through to victory.

FELA have had to win their dispute twice. Most recently FELA members took 6 days of strike action. Worryingly, there is now growing Concern that Colleges Scotland is again dragging its feet in terms of honouring the deal they made only a few weeks ago.

The EIS suspended the strikes as agreed – we will not accept Colleges Scotland failing to deliver the agreed pay enhancements. I should make clear of Colleges Scotland who signed the agreement and the Scottish Government who helped broker it, that neither will be forgiven if lecturers are forced back into

strike action again. They should both be clear we will not be betrayed on this issue.

To be in the position of being able to sustain that level of fight, FELA activists had worked for over a year to build support amongst members, and for two years before that in terms of last year's action, and just as importantly to build confidence amongst members that they could win the campaign.

We need to do the same for teachers.

## The Trade Union Act

The anti-trade union act means that a vote not cast is a vote against – that's a challenge we need to be able to rise to; and the key to that is you, colleagues; you are the key activists is this union.

If you're not building this campaign in your school branches and local associations, who will?

EIS HQ will support and advise, but it can't substitute for the lay leadership of this union.

I think Scotland's teachers need to make their voice heard; I think it's time for Scotland's teachers to fightback; I think it's time for the EIS to lead that fightback.

I Mentioned the anti-Trade Union Act – another consequence of that is that we need to ballot members on the retention of our political fund; it's important that we maintain this fund as it allows us to run campaigns such as our local government manifesto. (see SEJ flyer for more information)

## SQA and Workload

It's never just about pay for teachers – terms and conditions, and the ability to do our job, have always been key issues for members and over the past few years addressing workload has been the number one issue.

Our action on SQA created workload led to a victory with the planned removal of Unit assessments from National 5 and Higher.

Some concerns were expressed about the removal of RPA and we have attempted to respond to those in terms of the timetable structures which should be promoted to ensure space and time for deep learning and breadth – two of the key aims of the senior Phase, largely unrealised to date.

It is hugely frustrating that the SQA seems to have responded - to legitimate criticism from teachers of its role in the new qualifications challenge - with a truculent attitude towards the need for changes to be implemented.

I urge the SQA to stop picking fights with the profession and to try work with us.

Last year we had the Deputy First

Minister here at conference and he made clear his determination to address bureaucracy and excessive workload, to allow a focus on teaching and learning.

I have heard him on a number of occasions indicate how he believes he is addressing our concerns through the advice he has issued, through Education Scotland, and the introduction of benchmarks in literacy and numeracy.

We carried out a short survey of 1,000 members – weighted to ensure a representative sample and with a return rate which gives us 95% veracity.

When asked about workload changes in the past year, 87% of respondents stated that workload had increased over 2016-2017 session.

So, whilst I don't doubt the intention of the Deputy First Minister to address teacher concerns, the simple fact is that it isn't happening.

As ever in Scottish Education, there is a gap between rhetoric and reality. So maybe some time needs to be spent on actually dealing with the problem.

Despite the ambition, workload satisfaction has decreased with a majority of 19% of respondents scoring just 1 out of 10 (not at all satisfied) for current workload satisfaction.

Our Previous survey had shown only 10% of respondents scored 1 out of 10.

Pay and excessive workload need to be tackled.

In the survey, we asked the question as to how many respondents would recommend teaching as a profession. A majority of 54% of respondents stated that they would not recommend teaching as a career choice.

Our previous survey showed that 44% of respondents would not recommend teaching as a profession.

Teachers should be your best advert for the profession but if 54% are saying they wouldn't recommend it as a career, that's a very clear sign for the Government and employers that action needs to be taken – and that action needs to make a difference to teachers.

## International

I was invited to join a delegation visiting Bosnia to learn more about what happened at Srebrenica.

In a sense, I knew what happened because the events occurred in the 1990s; along with many of you, I watched on television as Serbian forces attacked Bosnian Muslims in towns like Sarajevo.

I learned the meaning of a new phrase – “ethnic cleansing.”

But I was still shocked when I visited the country and listened to survivors of the genocide which occurred there or to

women who were victims of rape as a weapon of war and terror.

At Srebrenica I stood in the cemetery where 8,372 men and boys are buried – executed for being Muslim.

So, I would commend to you the teaching materials which the charity has created with a view to educating our children of the horrors of racism and xenophobia.

Tragic events of the last few weeks underline the importance of the work we do as educators in challenging racism and promoting equity and respect.

## Staffing

We have experienced a number of staff changes this year: notably we saw Area Officers Karen Barclay and Frank Healey retire; along with Lyn McLintock our CPD coordinator and the long serving Babs Clements who you would have met if you ever visited Moray Place or would have spoken to if you phoned.

Our thanks to all of them for their service and other colleagues who have moved on during the year.

Particular thanks go to Assistant Secretary Drew Morrice, who has finally retired after a career long affiliation to the EIS – firstly as an activist and then latterly as a full-time official.

Drew's knowledge of all things SNCT or casework related is encyclopaedic and his skill set, good humour and hard work will certainly be missed but we wish him and other colleagues all the best in retirement.

We have over the past few years had a number of first time delegates to AGM, which is a healthy sign of renewal within our own ranks, so I am very pleased to again welcome 46 first time delegates to this year's AGM.

I am pleased to report that despite the impact of austerity on teacher employment, our paying membership has grown over the year by around 600, which is good news. I have no doubt that the weight of the EIS is a key factor in our ability to influence policy – we have within our ranks a level of professional unity which other parts of the world would dearly love to have.

## The voice of Scotland's Teachers

It's been a busy year and it will be a busy year ahead.

There are huge political uncertainties abroad and we will require to chart a passage through them.

I believe we are well equipped to do so; as a trade union and as a professional association, the Educational Institute of Scotland is the voice of Scotland's teachers – **let's make that voice heard.**

## Holocaust education



"the reasons we should teach about the Holocaust should be obvious to anyone who cares about social justice"

**Carolyn Ritchie**

Carolyn Ritchie (Glasgow) moved a Motion on behalf of Glasgow Local Association requesting that Council support a campaign to establish Holocaust Education as a feature of the Curriculum for Excellence. Ms Ritchie stated that, "The reasons we should teach about the Holocaust should be obvious to anyone who cares about social justice" and argued that "the minds and hearts of our young people are at risk from the othering of minority groups across society." Ms Ritchie concluded that, "We must ensure that epoch-changing events are not allowed to be airbrushed out of history."

The Motion was seconded by Jayne Rowe (Glasgow) who expressed concern that, "Hate speech is becoming normalised", and spoke of the value of Holocaust education in addressing many types of prejudice.

The Motion was opposed by Joanne Thomson (Scottish Borders) on the grounds of concerns about it being narrowly interpreted. She said, "Understanding what happened in our history can allow us to prevent these events happening again", and added, "The issue is that there isn't only one Holocaust", referencing events in Rwanda and in Syria. Ms Thomson also expressed concerns about the decline in the number of RMPS teachers, who would cover these issues.

Supporting the Motion, Education Convener Susan Quinn (Glasgow) stated that Holocaust education doesn't solely come under RMPS, and affirmed that, "This Motion is about establishing Holocaust education as a feature of Curriculum for Excellence", in a way that will allow teachers to discuss all of the atrocities that have occurred. The Motion was carried.

## Reduction in EAL Teachers and ASN staff



"the attainment gap will become a cavernous gorge"

**Louise Glen**

A Motion proposed by Glasgow, Renfrewshire and East Lothian Local Associations, was moved by Education Convener, Susan Quinn (Glasgow). The Motion asked AGM to express its concern at the continuing reduction in EAL teachers,

ASN teachers and vital support staff, including classroom assistants and ASN assistants; call on Council to campaign for an increase in staffing to support this provision; instruct Council to campaign for a review of resourcing of the Education (ASL) (Scotland) Act 2009; and urge the Scottish Government to increase funding and staffing levels following this review.

Louise Glen (North Lanarkshire), a Support for Learning Teacher, spoke of cuts to the service, and poor working conditions, sharing her experience of having "worked in corridors, cloakrooms, and what I consider to be a cupboard." Ms Glen warned that "the attainment gap will become a cavernous gorge" if this continues. Conference concurred with the need for action, and unanimously supported the Motion

## Pupils with social, emotional and mental health issues



"we all believe in inclusion"

**Lorna Malarky**

Lorna Malarky (Edinburgh) moved a Motion, instructing Council to investigate and report on the impact of increasing numbers of pupils and students being identified with social, emotional and mental health issues, on teachers, lecturers, students and pupils, in a time of budget and staffing cuts. Ms Malarky stated that "we all believe in inclusion" but shared the difficulties of meeting learners' needs in large class sizes, where children with complex needs all have different strategies, and reported that "the impact on teachers' mental health is noticeable."

The Motion was carried unanimously.

## GIRFEC and workload



"no attempt to quantify the impact on workload, and none to quantify the impact of GIRFEC planning"

**Clare Kelly**

Edinburgh delegate Clare Kelly successfully moved a Motion instructing Council to investigate and report on the workload associated with GIRFEC and young person's planning meetings across all schools in Scotland; and the level of support available from external agencies.

Ms Kelly raised concerns that there has been "no attempt to quantify the impact on workload, and none to quantify the impact of GIRFEC planning."

## Course on Trade Unionism



"it is the duty of us to raise this in our schools and all to do our bit to promote positive trade unionism"

**John Swinburne**

A Motion calling for the EIS, in conjunction with the STUC, to devise a course on the positive benefits of trade unionism that could be taught as part of PSE programmes in Scottish schools and colleges, was moved on behalf of Edinburgh Local Association by John Swinburne who stated that this Motion aimed to build on existing materials, and take account of the precarious working conditions faced by many young people. Mr Swinburne stated that, "It is the duty of us to raise this in our schools and all to do our bit to promote positive trade unionism."

The Motion was seconded by Edinburgh delegate Alison Murphy, who reflected on the gains made by trade unions for ordinary workers (including sick pay, maternity pay, and equal pay) and arguing that "kids need to know about unions." Conference agreed with the Motion and it was carried unanimously.

## Kindergarten stage



investigate and report on the effect of an increase in the statutory age for starting primary school to age 7

**Andrew O'Halloran**

A Dumfries and Galloway Local Association Motion on a kindergarten stage was successfully moved by Andrew O'Halloran. The Motion resolved that the EIS should investigate and report on the effect of an increase in the statutory age for starting primary school to age 7 and the development of a compulsory kindergarten stage, with a focus on social skills and learning through play.

## Islamophobia



spoke about recent shocking spike in racially aggravated incidents and Islamophobic hate crimes

**Nicola Fisher**

Equality Convener Bill Ramsay (South Lanarkshire) successfully proposed a Motion on behalf of Council instructing the EIS to refresh its advice on Islamophobia, taking into account political and legal developments since the last iteration of EIS advice on Islamophobia. Mr Ramsay

said, “At the heart of this will be our professional values, embracing locally and globally the values of equality and social justice” and contended that teachers “have a professional duty to demand that our employers support and resource this, so that our members can confidently get into sensitive discussions with their pupils on this issue.”

Seconding, President Elect Nicola Fisher (Glasgow) spoke about recent shocking events in London, Manchester and across the Middle East, and the subsequent spike in racially aggravated incidents and Islamophobic hate crimes reported to the police.

## Racism and Islamophobia



requesting that Council undertake and report on a survey of all members experiences of Racism and Islamophobia  
**Donny Gluckstein**

Donny Gluckstein (EIS-FELA) proposed a Motion on behalf of EIS-FELA and Glasgow Local Association, requesting that Council undertake and report on a survey of all EIS members on teachers’ and lecturers’ direct or indirect experiences of Racism and Islamophobia. The Motion also called for Council to campaign in support of members challenging Islamophobia in Scottish schools and colleges; and to defend the right of pupils, students and staff in schools and colleges to experience education in an environment that is free from Islamophobic behaviour.

The Motion was seconded by Samreen Shah (Glasgow), who cited evidence that Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) teachers from all ethnic groups are being given stereotyped roles in terms of responsibility for challenging racism, which some felt limited their career progression and others felt labelled them as ‘troublemakers’. Ms Shah said, “We talk about the glass ceiling; well there’s a bullet-proof ceiling for BME staff.”

Conference agreed with the Motion and it was passed unanimously.

## Child Refugees



the EIS should condemn the decision of the Home Office to curtail the number of Child Refugees  
**John Dennis**

John Dennis (Dumfries and Galloway) successfully moved that the EIS should condemn the decision of the Home Office to curtail the number of Child Refugees admitted to the UK.

Mr Dennis gave a highly emotive and personal speech, which drew parallels between the current child refugee crisis and the oppression of Jews and others within Europe in the time leading up to and during WWII, and the failure of governments to act to help refugees.

The Motion was seconded by Andrew O’Halloran (Dumfries and Galloway) and supported unanimously by AGM.

## Anti-Racist education



“promote and re-establish Anti-Racist Education firmly in the curriculum”  
**Samreen Shah**

Glasgow delegate Samreen Shah successfully proposed a Motion calling on Council to promote and re-establish Anti-Racist Education firmly in the curriculum for every year group and sector; including training for all teachers and lecturers; and to investigate and report on the number of racist incidents that occur in Scottish schools and use this evidence to inform the EIS campaign for appropriate anti-racist education in all schools.

The Motion was seconded by President Elect Nicola Fisher (Glasgow) who spoke of the duty of teachers to “help children see an alternative narrative – one that values people of different faiths, and values people from different backgrounds.”

## Time for Inclusive Education campaign



“TIE want to tackle discrimination – they are not seeking redesign of the curriculum”  
**John Kelly**

John Kelly (EIS-FELA) successfully moved that the EIS should affiliate to the Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) campaign.

“TIE want to tackle discrimination – they are not seeking redesign of the curriculum or changes that would increase the workload of teachers,” said Mr Kelly.

Seconding the Motion, Des Kenny (Glasgow) said, “This will offer valuable CPD opportunities to all teachers.”

A number of speakers – including Chris Jukes (Angus), Saffron Thain (Orkney) and Dawn Wilson (West Dunbartonshire) made emotional speeches, citing real-world examples from their own schools and authorities, which highlighted how pupils and teachers who were LGBTI+ would benefit.

## Attainment Fund spending



“In many ways, the horse has already bolted – but the concerns behind this Motion still stand”  
**Andrene Bamford**

Andrene Bamford (East Dunbartonshire) was successful in calling for the EIS to campaign for clear Scottish Government guidelines on the spending of Attainment Fund allocations at local level.

Noting that some direct funding allocations to schools had already taken place, Ms Bamford said, “In many ways, the horse has already bolted – but the concerns behind this Motion still stand. Additional money for education is always welcome, but the way in which this money has been given is a cause for concern – directly to Headteachers, bypassing the democratic structures of local authorities.”

## Wealth Taxes and support for Education



investigate potential use of Wealth Taxes as a means of increasing spending on education  
**Allan Crosbie**

The EIS will investigate and report on potential use of Wealth Taxes as a means of increasing spending on education and closing the poverty-related attainment gap, as the result of a successful Motion from Allan Crosbie (Edinburgh) which was seconded by Bill Ramsay (South Lanarkshire).

## The Governance Review, the SNCT and LNCTs



Successful call for the EIS to reaffirm its commitment to the role of the SNCT  
**Megan McCrossan**

Megan McCrossan (North Lanarkshire) successfully called for the EIS to reaffirm its commitment to the role of the SNCT, LNCTs and to collegiality in light of the Scottish Government’s Review of Governance. Noting that the Scottish Government was due to publish information on the Governance Review consultation the week after the AGM, Ms McCrossan said, “Is it too cynical to ask why the Scottish Government has decided to publish its response the week after Scotland’s largest teaching union holds its AGM?”

## Workload & Work-life balance



"Has any progress been made in relation to workload since the last pay deal?"

**Susan Quinn**

Education Convener Susan Quinn successfully moved a Motion on behalf of EIS Council calling for a campaign to ensure that local authorities, the Scottish Government, Education Scotland and the SQA act to reduce teacher workload and ensure a healthy work-life balance for teachers.

Highlighting a previous binding commitment to tackle workload, Ms Quinn said, "Has any progress been made in relation to workload since the last pay deal? The workload stats referenced by the General Secretary in his speech this morning (see p10 of this SEJ) would seem to indicate not." Seconding the Motion, Allan Crosbie (Edinburgh) said, "The facultisation of secondary departments has been horrific for workloads and is also uneducational. We also know that our contact hours in Scotland are currently the fourth highest in the world."

## Teachers supplying school resources



"We are frequently using our own meagre resources to supplement our schools' meagre resources"

**Donal Hurley**

Donal Hurley (Clackmannanshire) entertained AGM with a humorous take on a worrying issue – that of teachers spending their own money to top up diminishing school resources (see image below):



"We all do this, because it is for the weans," said Mr Hurley. "We are frequently using our own meagre resources to supplement our schools' meagre resources."

The Motion, which was seconded by Karen Farrell (Clackmannanshire), was backed overwhelmingly by AGM delegates and commits the EIS to investigate and report on the extent of this issue across the country.

## Defibrillators in Schools



"simple to use and designed to save lives in the first 4 minutes following a cardiac arrest"

**Michael Dunn**

Delegates to the 2017 AGM agrees that every school should be equipped with a defibrillator. Opening the debate, Michael Dunn (South Lanarkshire) said that automated external defibrillators (AED) were simple to use and were designed to save lives in the first 4 minutes following a cardiac arrest. He added that the costs were not outrageous and that they were widely used in a number of workplaces, including Council Headquarters.

## Taxes & Revenue



"There are a number of options – such as a Whisky Tax – which could be explored to increase revenue"

**Bill Ramsay**

The EIS will investigate additional measures that the Scottish Government could consider to increase overall revenue available for public services, as the result of a successful Motion from Bill Ramsay (South Lanarkshire) which was seconded by Allan Crosbie (Edinburgh).

Highlighting one possible option, Mr Ramsay said, "There are a number of options – such as a Whisky Tax – which could be explored to increase revenue. The annual turnover of the Whisky industry in Scotland is around £5Billion. Around £3Billion of that is pure profit, after all other costs including staffing and taxation have been taken into account."

## The GTCS & payment of Fees

The EIS will engage with the GTCS on the issue of alternative methods of paying registration fees, as the result of a successful Motion from David Baxter (Dundee) which was seconded by David Smith.

Referencing the recent decision by the GTCS to increase its annual registration fee by 30%, Mr Baxter said, "It would be very easy to put the boot into the GTCS again – but the reality is that the GTCS itself needs to get real and look at allowing a variety of methods for the payment of registration fees."

## Social Media & inappropriate comments



"guidance on social media relates to the obligations on school staff – nothing about the obligations on those we work in partnership with"

**John Black**

The EIS will launch a national campaign highlighting the negative impact of inappropriate social media comments on home/school relationships, as the result of a successful Motion from John Black (Aberdeenshire).

"Current guidance on social media relates to the obligations on school staff – but there is nothing about the obligations on those we work in partnership with, including parents and carers," said Mr Black.

Seconding the Motion, David Smith (Aberdeenshire) added, "Not all postings are negative, but there are many inappropriate postings on social media that are upsetting to teachers and potentially damaging to positive school/home partnerships."

## Alternatives to Exclusion



"Mainstreaming is absolutely fine when you have the resources to deliver it"

**Kenny Fella**

Kenny Fella (Renfrewshire) was successful in a call for the EIS to campaign for an alternative to exclusion that would protect teachers from abusive behaviour. The Motion was seconded by Greg Morris.

"Mainstreaming is absolutely fine when you have the resources to deliver it", said Mr Fella. "However, the resources to deliver mainstreaming have been drastically reduced. What is the alternative to exclusion that can be deployed to protect teachers from abusive behaviour? The violence that teachers are being subjected to must stop."

## Professional Registration & FE



"there is a need to explore means of enabling FE lecturers to apply their skills in other sectors"

**Pam Currie**

Pam Currie (EIS-FELA) successfully persuaded AGM to resolve to pursue potential routes for Professional Registration in other sectors, for GTCS

registered FE lecturers. She argued that in the context of greater emphasis on professional issues within FE, reduction in the number of employment opportunities for FE lecturers as a result of college mergers, and a growing number of lecturers being forced out of teaching because of casualisation and unsustainable commutes between college campuses, there is a need to explore means of enabling FE lecturers to apply their skills in other sectors. The Motion was seconded by Paula Dixon (EIS-FELA) and was carried unanimously.

## Electronic Communications and Social Media



highlighted the negative aspects of social media, such as cyber-bullying

**Andrene Bamford**

In view of its significance to all teachers, the AGM instructed Council to raise the profile of 'Professional Guidance on the Use of Electronic Communication and Social Media,' first published by the GTCS in 2011. Andrene Bamford (East Dunbartonshire) moved the Motion. She said that social media was everywhere and can have its positive uses. However, she also highlighted the negative aspects of social media, such as cyber-bullying, and argued that teachers were vulnerable to social media in a way that other professionals were not.

## Possible divestment from Fossil Fuels companies to be further explored

A Motion calling for the EIS to divest any funds currently invested in companies responsible for the extraction of fossil fuels was remitted to EIS Council for further consideration.

Moving the Motion, Allan Crosbie (Edinburgh) said, "More than any other profession or vocation, teaching is all about the future. We need to prevent the extraction of fossil fuels."

However, Helen Connor (North Lanarkshire) said, "While I very clearly support the sentiments behind this Motion, I do feel we need to further explore all aspects of this very complex issue."

A move to remit the Motion to Council to allow for further consideration, called by Tom Tracey (Inverclyde) was then overwhelmingly approved by AGM delegates.

## Initial Teacher Education



"investigate the ways in which equality matters are addressed within ITE programmes"

**Khadija Mohammed**

Khadija Mohammed (EIS-ULA) successfully moved a Motion on behalf of EIS Council, calling on the EIS to hold a series of exploratory discussions with ITE providers and the GTCS, to investigate the ways in which equality matters are addressed within ITE programmes; and develop recommendations for partners regarding enhancing current provision of equalities education for teachers, both through ITE and through ongoing Professional Learning.

The Motion was formally seconded by Samreen Shah (Glasgow).

## ICT strategies



"Teachers' professional judgement isn't trusted"

**Megan McCrossan**

Megan McCrossan, on behalf of North Lanarkshire Local Association, moved a Motion calling for employing councils to have ICT strategies and policies which allow teachers the widest possible access to online resources and to use their professional judgement to select which of these are suitable for teaching and learning. Ms McCrossan shared her experiences of being blocked from using useful videos in her teaching, stating that "my professional judgement isn't trusted."

## Free sanitary products



"investigate the cost and availability of sanitary provision in schools and colleges"

**Paula Dixon**

Paula Dixon (EIS-FELA) successfully proposed a Motion welcoming the initiative taken by South Lanarkshire College to provide free sanitary products to both staff and students; and requesting that Council investigate the cost and availability of sanitary provision in schools and colleges and pursue a campaign to highlight good practice such as South Lanarkshire College, and to demand that this extend to all schools and colleges.

## LGBT training



"very damaging and disgraceful legacy of section 28"

**Neil Duncan**

This Motion, from Aberdeen Local Association, successfully called for Council to survey members to provide evidence of the level of LGBT+ specific training they have received in the last five years and what training opportunities around LGBT+ exist within their local authority or are delivered by college employers. It was moved by Neil Duncan (Aberdeen), who spoke of the "very damaging and disgraceful legacy of section 28" and of the need to discover the facts about current LGBT+ training provision, citing Stonewall research which found that 90% of teachers believe it's their duty to tackle homophobic bullying but 90% hadn't received any training on this.

## Training in equality legislation

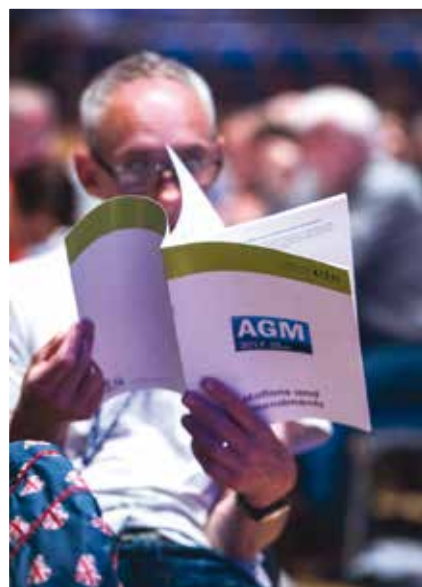


"I live in a world where people think it's OK to ask me what's wrong with me."

**Julie Ferguson**

This Motion, moved by Julie Ferguson on behalf of Orkney Local Association, called for a campaign for Local Authorities to provide regular training in equality legislation for all school staff. Ms Ferguson shared her personal experience of being subjected to inappropriate treatment related to her disabilities, stating that, "I live in a world where people think it's OK to ask me what's wrong with me." She noted that in her authority, equality training consists of an online course that can be clicked through in five minutes, and with better training, "staff would have more awareness."

Seconding the Motion, Julie Hutchison (Orkney) asked delegates, "Without proper training, how can we support our young people to be more accepting of difference?" The Motion received the unanimous backing of AGM delegates.



# Thanks

Thanks to all delegates, Perth Concert Hall staff, hotel and restaurant staff in Perth, and to all EIS employees involved in the organisation of the 2017 AGM. See you in Dundee next year!

We hope that you have enjoyed this special AGM edition of the SEJ - all the best for the summer and enjoy your break.