

# Renfrewshire Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers

To: Renfrewshire Joint Negotiating for Teachers

On: 14th May 2024

## Flexible Working

Report by

**Joint Secretary (Teachers' Side)**

### Background

The benefits of flexible working to both employers and employees are clear and are outlined in the Council's Flexible Working Policy (revised 6/23); it can enable employers to attract and retain staff and for employees there are benefits in terms of work/life balance and improvements to health and wellbeing.

There are concerns being expressed however with regards to how Renfrewshire Council's Flexible Working Policy is being applied to teachers because many applications are being refused despite the onus being on managers to: *"always consider flexible working requests equally and fairly, seeking to approve applications unless there is a clear business reason for not doing so"*

There is also a particular concern that the discretion afforded Headteachers to agree temporary applications of up to twelve months is not being permitted and that every application is being treated as a permanent contractual variation despite the appendix which exemplifies one type of flexible working:

<b>Voluntary reduced hours</b>	Reduces the number of hours worked for an agreed period, reverting to their substantive contracted hours at the end of the agreed period.
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Many teachers feel that their applications are not being considered in line with the policy. Nor is there consistently across establishments.

## **Action**

The Teachers' Side is seeking clarification around the application of the Flexible Working policy in schools to ensure that a consistent and fair approach is being adopted across all establishments and that teachers are not being arbitrarily denied the right to flexible working opportunities.