



Councillor John ALLCOCK
Labour Group Member for Goldsmid Ward
C/o Hove Town Hall
Norton Road
Hove
BN3 3BQ

23 February 2021

Dear Geoff,

I am submitting the following letter under Council Procedure Rule 23.3 to be included on the agenda for the Children and Young People and Skills Committee meeting on 8th March 2021.

On the 22nd January you and Councillor Phélim Mac Cafferty issued a council corporate briefing stating that at Policy & Resources Committee on 21st January, councillors voted to award all council staff a special "Thank You Day", an additional day of leave to be taken in the 2021/2022 business year – April 2021 to the end of March 2022. This was a way of showing appreciation and recognition for the 'care and compassion, dedication to the city and excellent public service to their colleagues, councillors and the communities we serve'.

In para 3.13 of the report to Policy and Resources Committee on 21st January officers reported *that*:

A key consideration has been the potential impact on schools, where annual leave arrangements are different from those applying to non-school staff. Additional leave is harder to accommodate, and also likely to be less impactful. Feedback from the Schools Block Working Group (a representative group of Headteachers) confirmed that individual governing bodies would be determining appropriately how to thank staff in schools and using their delegated authority they will determine how to recognise the work of their staff.

Following the announcement of the decision to award the *Thank You Day* to Council staff, trade unions received a significant number of queries from staff in schools who were upset and disappointed that they are not being treated the same as the rest of the Council's workforce and asking why.

I believe there is no contractual or statutory reason why an additional day off could not be granted and that this is at the discretion of the school/governing body.

I understand that there are operational issues about how this could be managed in a school environment, but that there are definitely ways that the *Thank You Day* for both teachers and support staff could be realised during the 21/22 financial year.

The impact of Covid-19 on our city's economy has been profound. We know how tough this time has been for many in our community. We have learnt how much we desperately need good public services. We understand how important it is to value our Public Sector staff including teachers and others who work in schools that have remained open to the children

of critical workers and vulnerable children, and also shown dedication and innovation in supporting families with home-schooling and remote learning.

I am calling on Councillor Clare as Chair of the Children and Young People and Skills Committee and the Leader of the Council, to:

- Strongly advise Headteachers and Governing bodies to identify a consistent approach across schools to provide the opportunity for all their staff to take the *Thank You Day* at an appropriate time during the next financial year, offering council officer support in achieving this if required.
- Issue a public statement on behalf of the Council thanking all school staff and governing bodies for their incredible work during the pandemic and confirming that it is the council's advice that all school staff be granted the *Thank You Day* to show appreciation and recognition for their commitment.

Best regards

Councillor John Allcock