
Briefing Paper by Unite the Union responding to LGA Employer's JNC Side letter - 8 December 2015

To all members of the ETS Committee

We have written this briefing paper in response to the LGA's JNC employers' side letter of 8 December 2015.

This side letter was drafted without the knowledge and consent of the Staff Side of the JNC and we believe the LGA Officers had no authority from elected members of the LGA to effectively proceed with their intention to effectively tear up the JNC Pink book and assimilate these terms and conditions with NJC Green book terms and conditions by terminating these national collective bargaining arrangements.

The consultation that took place regarding the maintenance of national collective bargaining for the JNC Pink book was a bogus exercise for the following reasons:

- Local Authorities were not asked if they would want to retain the JNC Pink book in relation to the professional and occupational standards of youth work and that the JNC is a suitable mechanism to help measure the quality and outcomes of youth work.
- There was no attempt by Officers to present an objective view regarding the retention of the JNC Pink Book and the benefits of the agreement in delivering services for children and young people.
- Voluntary, community and not for profit organisations, who also follow the JNC Pink book, were not invited to take part in the regional discussions in the Autumn of 2015.
- This bogus consultation was also aimed at Heads of HR depts, not the Heads of service that manage Children & Young Peoples services.

Unite the Union believe dismantling the JNC Pink Book national agreement will **de-professionalise** Youth, Community and Play Workers and the assimilation of the Youth and Community workers' pay, terms and conditions will not benefit children and young people services in England & Wales. In many cases this has proved to cost Local Authorities more funding at a time of limited resources and budgets.

What is the JNC for youth work? The arbiter of quality outcomes for young people.

The JNC for youth work is a well-established and has responded to the changing needs of employers and young people for over 50 years. The JNC is fit for purpose, and is already "equality proof". It is the arbiter of the Youth work profession: its' National Occupational Standards, its training and qualification framework, its' negotiation of working conditions. The standards are the framework against which youth work outcomes are measured qualitatively.

What is youth work? Effective, long-lasting, professional, best value informal education for young people.

Youth work is founded on a voluntary relationship between a Youth Worker and young person. It starts where young people are, and offers opportunities for young people that won't experience many opportunities easily or frequently. Its best value, as investments in youth services see cost savings everywhere. It's often cheaper; too, as £1 invested in a youth worker will produce £8 of work in the community. Youth workers are trained to seek out funding; resources and capacity build in communities.

Why JNC not NJC? To ensure the best quality outcomes for young people in the best value-for-money way.

The JNC is tailor-made for the job; it's the most finessed set of T&C's that serve the interests of all key stakeholders, i.e. young people, employers and staff. The JNC ensures that the benefits of Youth Work are received by the employers and communities where Youth Workers work, and that these beneficial outcomes are measurable.

What if youth workers aren't employed on JNC? You'll get worse outcomes for young people, at greater cost.

Abolition of the JNC will mean there will be no measure of how effective youth workers are. This means that youth work outcomes are unlikely to be captured and appreciated. The benefits that youth workers bring will be lost and replaced by work of less value. If workers aren't employed on JNC, universities will have little motivation to continue to offer JNC endorsed and ratified courses. JNC is the Professional status for trained & experienced staff to best meet the needs of hard to reach young people and vulnerable young people.

How will local communities be affected if youth workers aren't employed on JNC? Negatively.

Youth workers across England and Wales are often the "glue" that holds collaborations with schools, police, youth offending, voluntary organisations together, providing the bridge across generations, religions and cultures in many communities they serve. It's likely that youth work will cost more on NJC; given the current economic climate, that can only mean or worse offer or no offer for young people. More young people will be at risk and access to safe advice & information to stem the rise of teenage pregnancies, drug use, homelessness and mediation when family conflict occurs will create more pressure for our social care department.

Implications of retaining the JNC Pink Book?

Retaining the JNC will give the best protection for quality outcomes for young people. It would also send a strong signal to authorities not to, "dismiss and re-engage" of thousands of youth workers at great cost. JNC is the only recognised professional body that ensures Youth, Community & Play workers are at a national standard to meet the high demands and expectations required to work with young people. Maintaining the JNC would cost local authorities nothing and show them the value their overall work with children & young people.

Unite the Union will campaign relentlessly with other staff side unions to put the arguments forward to retain the JNC Pink book and we hope the ETS Committee will take an active role. We ask for your support to:

- 1. We endorse a full and frank discussion of this issue at the ETS Committee meeting in Leicester on Tuesday 12 January 2016.***
- 2. We ask the Chair to write to Chief Executive Officer of the LGA to voice concerns regarding the assimilation of the JNC and the implications this has on the profession and the recognition of professional youth work qualifications in the future, which will ultimately undermine the professional workforce and have a detrimental effect on the work with vulnerable young people.***
- 3. We also ask individual members of the ETS to raise this issue with their local authority.***