

Durham Local Government UNISON Bulletin

05 December 2016

Schools Edition

We are pleased that – at long last – Durham Council have returned to the negotiating table. This is something they said they would not do, and it's thanks to your dedication and resolve that progress is being made.

As a result, a decision has been reached to call off this week's three day strike, including action short of strike.

Whilst we understand concerns about the council having suspended rather than withdrawing dismissal notices, we are confident following these early talks that Durham Council no longer plans to sack and re-engage teaching assistants and that the massive pay cuts proposed by the council can be averted.

This is the basis on which ongoing negotiations are taking place. There will be TA representation both on the negotiating group and also the detailed work groups, which will need to be established as part of taking work forward.

We have stressed to Durham Council that urgent progress must be made, and that attempts to use this process as a delaying tactic will only result in a return to industrial action. They have agreed with the need for clarity and speed in these negotiations – and have organised meetings for this week and next. These meetings will set out the terms of reference, scope, process and timeline for taking forward negotiations, and begin consideration of the key issues of disagreement.

But there is still much work to do, and your union is clear that we will not rule out further strike action in the new year if significant progress isn't made.



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