

Date: 26 June 2023

Our Ref: 230626/KEEGAN G/PR/LB

NASUWT

The Teachers' Union

Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP
Secretary of State
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General Secretary
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Dear Gillian,

STRB 33rd REPORT

On 26 May, I wrote to you noting the very serious implications arising from the leaking of contents of the STRB's 33rd Report. I asked you to confirm what actions you have taken to identify how and why the contents of the STRB's Report were leaked to the press and the scale and substance of matters relating to the STRB's 33rd Report that may have been compromised. I note that you have not done so. I must, therefore, reiterate my request to you to do so.

In my aforementioned letter, I explained to you that the recent press reports were having a damaging impact on the reputation and integrity of the pay review body process whilst also affecting adversely the morale of our members. It is extremely disappointing that the Government appears to have contributed to further speculation, whilst persisting to delay the release of the STRB's 33rd Report.

The last few days have been dominated by widespread press and media reporting that the recommendations of the STRB and other pay review bodies may not be accepted by the Government. Such speculation has been led by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury whose comments to the media, we have no doubt, were made with the full support of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. Such comments and speculation are now threatening to bring the pay review body process into disrepute.

It is now imperative that you bring an end to the damaging speculation and publish immediately the 33rd Report of the STRB without further delay to allow all other statutory consultees the opportunity to review in full the contents of that Report. Delaying further the publication of the 33rd Report until the end of the academic year is unnecessary and will compromise your ability to engage in meaningful consultation prior to concluding this process.

In your letter to me dated 14 June, you wrote that *"the issue of teacher and leaders' pay will now be determined through the usual STRB process"*. You also stated that *"the Government intends to publish the report once it has considered its response, as it does each year"*. Given recent press reports, we would welcome clarification from you over any decisions that have been taken by the Government in respect of the teachers' pay award.

It is of increasing concern to the NASUWT that the STRB process is unable to operate as it should due to the Government's actions. On 26 January, your Department notified the STRB that it would be delaying the submission of your evidence by the 27 January deadline. Your eleventh-hour decision led to the process for statutory consultees to submit evidence to the pay review body being paused. On 21 February, prior to confirmation from the STRB of a revised timetable for submission of evidence, you published your written evidence to the press and media, further compromising the pay review body process.

Your decisions on delay and publication of evidence are not consistent with the established pay review body process and contributed to further delays to the process for submission of Supplementary Evidence and the timetable for giving oral evidence to the pay review body.

In recent months, you have made various statements to the press and media that teachers' pay will be determined by the STRB. Indeed, on 3 April, your Department stated in a tweet that "pay will now be decided by the independent pay review body".

On 21 May, which we can only assume in the absence of any assurances from you or evidence to the contrary, the Government leaked an important recommendation of the STRB. Our members are concerned that you are seeking to exploit that leak by commenting to the press and media and by not publishing the Review Body's Report. We believe such actions to be highly prejudicial.

There is no justification for you to further delay the publication of the STRB's 33rd Report and we, therefore, ask that you end this charade, publish the STRB's 33rd Report immediately and in full, and resume the process of negotiations from which you previously withdrew in order that an acceptable settlement can be reached.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Roach', written in a cursive style.

Dr Patrick Roach
General Secretary