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Joint strike action proposed

A special meeting of UCU's Further Education Committee was held on 11 December to consider branch feedback from the 10 November strike and determine the next steps in the 2015/16 FE England pay dispute. The committee also received a report on further developments since 10 November which included:

- A meeting with the other unions will take place at a Trade Union Side NJF meeting which is to be held on 15 January 2016.
- UNISON's FE Committee have decided to ballot their FE England members on strike action with the ballot opening in January.
- In light of the better than originally expected outcome of the government's comprehensive spending review UCU and UNISON wrote to the AoC seeking to re-open the 2015/16 pay talks. However, The AoC responded that they had no mandate to re-open talks the 2015/16 talks.

FEC voted to make initial preparations for a further one day strike and that UCU propose to coordinate the strike action with UNISON. FEC would ideally like the joint strike action to be held on 2 March 2016 in order to lobby the AoC's 2016 Governance Summit to be held in London on that day. However, the timing will be discussed at a meeting with UNISON on 15 January.

FEC also decided that on the day of the agreed strike that a joint rally be held in London inviting speakers from the Shadow Cabinet, sister unions, Action for ESOL and other sector organisations. Details of the strike day and other arrangements will be announced following the Trade Union Side NJF meeting on 15 January 2016.

Post 16 Area Reviews

FEC received a report on actions being taken to support branches affected by area reviews. Regional officials are coordinating and supporting branches currently involved in reviews to ensure UCU maximises its influence by speaking with one voice.

Where reviews are already underway regional officials have sought meetings with the chair of each of the review steering groups and meetings are being held together with other trade unions and in parallel with the steering group meetings.

Branches are encouraged to refer to the UCU produced guidance and in particular to use the model questionnaire to gather information about how the review may affect each college. UCU's guidance can be found at:

<http://www.ucu.org.uk/post16areareview>

Further steps will be taken early in the New Year to support branches:

- In January branches will receive an updated briefing on the latest state of play of reviews already underway and information on the schedule of upcoming reviews.
- This will include a model letter and briefing for lobbying MPs will be produced and branches will be encouraged to use these in their campaigning.
- Further information and training on bargaining around organisational change will be provided.
- Where branches want to take action to resist outcomes of reviews or mergers this may be coordinated.

Colleges to be included in the second wave commencing in the first quarter of 2016 have been announced and a list of these can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reviewing-post-16-education-and-training-institutions-list-of-area-reviews/reviewing-post-16-education-and-training-institutions-details-of-the-area-reviews>

Geographically indicative areas for the remaining three waves of reviews have also been announced however the composition of each of the reviews within these has not yet been determined. Similarly no decision has yet been made on the composition of are reviews inside London. The broad geographic indications for waves three to five can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reviewing-post-16-education-and-training-institutions-list-of-area-reviews/reviewing-post-16-education-and-training-institutions-indicative-information-for-wave-3-to-5-area-reviews>

Our intention is to provide branches with a note of which colleges are covered by each review as soon as possible in January.

FEC also noted that there will be an event, initiated by the London region on the theme 'Defend Further and Adult education'. This will be held on Saturday 5 March and further information will follow.