

**Executive questions to Teaching Council chief executive Lesley Hoskin on 21 February 2020**

1. *The main concern from members in my region is that they simply cannot afford the proposed fees. Many are low income Maori and Pasifika teachers with wide-ranging family responsibilities. You have only given them a choice between \$470 and \$500 and they can't afford either. What will you do to ensure fees don't rise to this level?*

LH - Yes, we are aware of these challenges. Is it just in South Auckland or across Aotearoa? Part of the issue is the legislation we operate under which makes it more difficult to charge different groups of people different amounts. I would encourage them to make submissions with these thoughts.

2. *Did you consider the affect it would have on teachers receiving the email with an 125% fee increase on 28th January, when they are in the midst of the busy start-up period of the year? Does such a poor choice of day in the school year reflect the huge distance between practising teachers and the Council?*

LH – We only had two choices: late in 2019 when teachers were exhausted after a tough year or first thing in 2020. We went for late January because that is when teachers have more non-contact time. We are constrained by needing to have this gazetted by May for 1 July implementation. In hindsight, we should have sent a heads-up e-mail saying this was coming. Many teachers have reported they felt blindsided by the announcement.

3. *The feedback to the consultation appears at this stage to be overwhelmingly against the proposed fees. What are your options if say you receive 20,000 odd submissions, and 99% are against the increase?*

LH – We are in the middle of a process so it is important to wait and see all the feedback. We have to look at all options e.g what other funding might exist from the Government and Ministry. We are looking hard at the suggestions teachers make.

4. *Given the reaction to the proposals, have you or will you approach Government and/or the Ministry for alternative funding?*

LH – Yes, as per the previous question. We are doing this and will continue to do it.

5. *Our members know they are entitled to the paid professional development because it is guaranteed to them in the Collective Agreement. Why should teachers pay for their own PD through a fees-funded Leadership Centre?*

LH – The leadership centre is only a small part of why fee increases are required the leadership section also includes maintaining and updating the code and standards. I would encourage you and your members to read the full proposal in detail. You are undertaking PD too through the new Fund which I know you are very proud of. The ministry has an important role to play too.

6. *The proposed fees disproportionately affect new teachers, part-time teachers and relievers. Do you care that the proposed fees may dissuade graduates from taking up beginning teacher positions? Do you care that part-timers once again get a raw deal? Do you care that relievers may restrict their relieving to 10 days so they don't need a teaching certificate, and the effect that this will have on schools?*

LH – The choice between \$470 and \$500 was only meant as a conversation starter. I would encourage you and your members to submit with what other solutions and ideas exist.

7. *I find the whole process to be in bad faith - the timing, giving two options that are virtually the same, and the wording of the feedback form "Have no preference". Will you really take teachers' feedback seriously?*

LH – Yes, teachers' feedback will be taken seriously. As I said earlier, the two options were "only a starter for ten". We need to hear from teachers around what other options might exist.

8. *Are you aware that the Teaching Council is widely disliked by teachers and do you worry that a fees increase of this magnitude will worsen this relationship?*

LH – The ones that have worked with us love us. I do know we have work to do on how we communicate with teachers.

**Final words from LH:**

I am aware of the need to lower the cost of the Disciplinary Tribunal. Changes to the law about what constitutes "serious misconduct" means that the cost of the running the DT have gone up. Obviously professional reputation and child safety must be upheld but I believe this is an area where we could reduce costs and therefore fees.