

## **Workforce Programme Board – report by Sir Steve Bullock (Chair)**

### **Pensions**

1. In the public sector Spending Review statement, the Government announced its intention to increase employee pension contributions in the public service pension schemes (other than the Armed Forces Pension Scheme) - the increases to be introduced progressively over the period 2012/13 to 2014/15.
2. The LGA is concerned that the implications for local authorities, their workforce and the wider economy may not have been fully considered and are calling on the Government to enter into a dialogue with employers and unions in order to consider further how best to achieve the Government's aims.
3. Baroness Eaton and I wrote an open letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer expressing these concerns and urging action ahead of the outcomes from the report of the Independent Public Service Pensions Commission. Our letter is available at [www.lge.gov.uk](http://www.lge.gov.uk)

### **Local government services pay**

4. The local government services employers have informed the local government trade unions that they will not be in a position to make any pay offer for 2011/12. This is in response to the unions' claim for at least £250 on all salary points.

### **Delivering workforce efficiencies**

5. Throughout March, the LG Group is running a series of intensive action learning workshops for HR directors and senior practitioners, aimed at supporting councils in reducing workforce costs in a rapid, yet sustainable way. The workshops are opportunities for delegates to receive tailored advice and support on how to create workforce efficiencies while minimising the need for redundancies.
6. The first two events in London and Bristol took place on 1 and 3 March with 95 per cent of delegates rating them as either good or excellent. All participants found the networking and knowledge sharing opportunities extremely valuable.
7. The events are being reported in real time on Twitter, follow [#lgworkforce](https://twitter.com/lgworkforce), plus there's a blog about the first event in the LG Group [workforce communities of practice](http://www.lgworkforce.com/workforce-communities-of-practice).
8. The remaining events are as follows: Leicester, 14 March; Newcastle, 24 March; Manchester, 29 March.

## **Apprenticeships**

9. LG Group support for National Apprenticeship Week 2011 (7 - 11 February) included:
  - 9.1 A regional East of England LGA /LG Improvement and Development event on 11 February, which attracted 80 delegates and where the new Apprenticeships Guide for the region was launched;
  - 9.2 The launch of the [A-List Apprentices publication](#), which includes 27 individual success stories from apprentices working in local government;
  - 9.3 Publication of six council success stories in the [Public Sector Apprenticeships community of practice library](#) along with new research on NEETs from Suffolk County Council.

## **Delivering services differently**

10. LG Group has just launched a new guide for council HR directors on the workforce implications of setting up social enterprises/mutuals. The guide provides detailed definitions of different types of social enterprise, information on TUPE in relation to social enterprises, guidance on how to respond to a social enterprise request, including template letters, and signposting to a range of other useful resources and organisations. The guide is downloadable from [www.lge.gov.uk](http://www.lge.gov.uk)

## **Reducing agency staff costs**

11. Following the success of the online conferences - [Shaping a Lean Local Government Workforce](#) and [Regaining control of the landscape by knowing our numbers](#) - in November and January, both run in partnership with OGC and Gloucestershire County Council, the third and final online conference in the series takes place on 23 March. Based on feedback from participants, the [next conference](#) will cover social care and MSTAR: OGC's Managed Service for Temporary Agency Resources project.

## **Employment law**

12. The Advisory Bulletin provides a monthly update on legislative and case law developments, and guidance on how they impact on local authorities. Advisory Bulletin 574 focuses on the Government's consultation on resolving workplace disputes and reforming the employment tribunal system, as well as reporting cases on the rights of volunteers, and selection for suitable alternative employment in a redundancy situation.

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