

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

### **CoP of the year: Workforce Matters**

1. Congratulations to Workforce Matters, which has won the 2010-11 Community of Practice (CoP) of the year. The CoP exists to help councils deliver better services by effectively managing and developing their workforces. Its remit and innovative approach to sharing learning has attracted 1,900 members representing 77 per cent of councils. The CoP can be accessed at: [www.local.gov.uk/improvementanddevelopment](http://www.local.gov.uk/improvementanddevelopment)

### **Firefighters - part-time workers**

2. Authorities will be aware of the Employment Tribunal cases brought against individual fire and rescue authorities in connection with the Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment Regulations, and that LG Employers has been acting on behalf of affected authorities in the negotiations, requested by the Employment Tribunal service, to identify a resolution to these cases as far as the terms and conditions aspect is concerned.

3. Agreement has now been reached with the Fire Brigades Union on both a settlement and a mechanism to facilitate withdrawal of cases supported by the FBU. Negotiations have been taking place separately with the Retained Firefighters' Union to facilitate withdrawal of the cases supported by the RFU and formal agreement has now also been reached on both the settlement and mechanism for withdrawal of the RFU supported cases. More information is available at [www.local.gov.uk/employers](http://www.local.gov.uk/employers)

### **Employment law**

4. The Spring edition of our quarterly employment law podcasts (at [www.local.gov.uk/employers](http://www.local.gov.uk/employers)) examines the practical implications for local authorities arising from some recent cases and key items of new legislation, including:

- The most important issues for local authorities in the Government's new consultation on encouraging more disputes to be resolved in the workplace and amending the employment tribunal system;
- A ruling on what employment-related rights volunteers have in the workplace;
- An overview of the Equality Act's new public sector duty for workforce data reporting requirements and how local authorities can get ready to implement it.

### **Teachers' pensions**

#### Pensionable pay

5. New frequently asked questions on pensionable pay under the Teachers' Pension Scheme have been developed and are available at: [www.local.gov.uk/employers](http://www.local.gov.uk/employers)

Teachers' Pensions Conference 2011

6. The LG Group's Teachers' Pensions Conference is taking place on Thursday 29 September 2011 at the Local Government House conference suite.

7. There is a lot to cover in this year's conference: The Independent Public Service Pensions Commission, led by Lord Hutton and established by the Coalition Government, has published its final report; the scheme managers - the Department for Education - will discuss the impact that the Government's public sector pension reform will have on the Teachers' Pension Scheme; there will be presentations about new regulations, including the 2012 workplace pension reforms and changes to the annual and lifetime allowances. Also, Capita, which has been successful in retaining the contract for the administration of the TPS, will present their transformation programme and implications for employers.

**Retirement age**

8. LG Employers has launched a 'Managing Older Workers in Local Government' project to provide information and guidance to local authorities on recognising the potential benefits in actively developing, retaining and recruiting from an older labour market. A critical element to this work is to identify real-life examples of how local authorities have already changed their policies for managing and supporting their staff in preparation for the recent removal of the default retirement age.

9. We are therefore looking for local authorities which would like to volunteer to share their experiences in managing and supporting older workers for a series of case studies to share with the sector. These case studies will form part of the wider resources that will be developed with the local government sector in the coming months.

10. If your local authority would be interested in providing more information about successful practices developed, challenges faced and lessons learned, please contact [eru@lge.gov.uk](mailto:eru@lge.gov.uk) by 20 May 2011.

**Employment law**

11. The Advisory Bulletin provides a monthly update on legislative and case law developments, and guidance on how they impact on local authorities. Advisory Bulletin 577 focuses on redundancy and sex discrimination cases as well as on equal pay and pay protection. It also provides a summary of the Bribery Act 2010.

**Contact officer:** Sarah Messenger  
**Position:** Head of Workforce  
**Phone no:** 020 71877342  
**E-mail:** [sarah.messenger@local.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.messenger@local.gov.uk)