

Workforce Board – report by Mayor Sir Steve Bullock (Chair)

Pensions

1. Good progress is being made in the discussions between the LGA, the principal local government unions and government. Proposals have been submitted to government for a new scheme design with proposals on future cost control and governance to follow later in May. It is hoped that consultation on scheme design with both employers and union members will commence in the very near future.

Proposed Final Agreement for new Teachers' scheme

2. Discussions have now concluded between the government and the unions and a Proposed Final Agreement (PFA) has been published. The first year of contribution increases for employees has been implemented. Although some unions have agreed to the PFA, the NUT and NASUWT remain opposed and are calling for further industrial action.

Local Government Services

3. The Employers' Secretary is next due to meet with the unions on 9 May for exploratory discussions on reform of pay, conditions and the national machinery. In the coming weeks and months, the views of local authorities in England, Wales and N Ireland will be sought on a number of possible scenarios resulting from the joint discussions.

Public Health Workforce Issues

4. The LGA continues to play a key role in ensuring that the right climate exists for local engagement between councils and PCT clusters on transitional public health workforce issues. Considerable progress has been made in several key areas:
 - 4.1 Group leaders in the LGA have now agreed that existing public health staff will retain access to their NHS pension at the point of transfer;
 - 4.2 The LGA is working with the Department of Health to ensure that the key lessons from an early review of the transition plans being put together by various out-going Strategic Health Authority groups are made available to help councils in local discussions;
 - 4.3 Work is continuing to ensure that the processes for future appointments of Directors of Public Health involve maximum local discretion, whilst allowing for national requirements around the delivery of public health;
 - 4.4 A "welcome guide" to working in local government for public health staff has been finalised and will be published as soon as possible.

School teachers

5. The National Employers' Organisation for School Teachers (NEOST) has now submitted its evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB). The NEOST evidence will be considered alongside that of other statutory consultees to inform the STRB's recommendations in respect of the following issues:
 - 5.1 How the pay framework for teachers should best be made more market-facing in local areas;
 - 5.2 How the pay scales, including the main and upper pay scales, should be reformed to more effectively link pay and performance; and
 - 5.3 What other reforms should be made to teachers' pay and conditions in order to raise the status of the profession and best support the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers in all schools.
6. In addition to the NEOST submission, the Workforce Team has submitted an LGA response to the government's wider call for evidence on how to make pay more market-facing in local areas for certain groups of public sector workers.

Fire

7. The FBU submitted a pay claim for 2012 on 13 March. The claim is for the Retail Price Index figure as available on 7 June to be applied to all NJC rates. The claim will be considered at the next meeting of the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services on 7 June 2012.

Youth and Community

8. The Staff Side submitted a pay claim for 2012 on 27 March. The claim is for '*A substantial rise on all grades and allowances from September 2012*'. There are other elements to the claim which include a payment of £250 to staff that earn £21,000 or less as well as the removal of the bottom two pay points on the scale. The Employers' Side will formally respond to the claim when the JNC for Youth and Community workers next meets on 20 June.

Soulbury

9. A joint circular with the Soulbury Officers' Side has been issued to authorities which provides an update on pay for 2011, an update on the Soulbury structure and includes advice on consultation and negotiation at local level.

Standards for Employers of Social Workers

10. This advisory group has now taken on board the work of the SWRB career framework, previously hosted by the Department of Education. Implementation of the standards is happening at different paces and the work of the LGA will be to promote them to councils and dovetail some of the SWRB products in sector-led improvement.

LGA conference

11. Topics and speakers have now been confirmed for both of the sessions which the Workforce team is hosting at the annual conference.

Contact officer: Sarah Messenger **Position:** Head of Workforce
Phone no: 020 71877342 **Email:** sarah.messenger@local.gov.uk