

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

Pensions

1. Proposals for a new Local Government Pension Scheme were announced on 31 May. These proposals were developed in agreement with the local government trade unions and will now be the subject to consultation by both the LGA and the unions.
2. Although final proposals for the Teachers Pension Scheme have been published, the NUT and NASUWT will be balloting their members on strike action in the Autumn over pensions, professional practice, working conditions and workload.

Local Government Services

3. The National Employers are continuing to take forward their plans for reform of pay, conditions and the national machinery and have briefed councils at a number of regional meetings. Please contact your regional employers' organisation for details of future events.
4. The National Employers have again declined requests from the Trade Union Side to refer 2012 pay to arbitration and to review the NJC mileage allowance rates. The Employers are clear that pay for 2012 has been concluded and that mileage allowances cannot be reviewed in isolation of discussions about wider reform.

Public Health Workforce Issues

5. As the pre-transfer process gathers momentum, the LGA is working to ensure that councils get clear messages on some complex issues. Considerable progress has been made in several key areas:
 - 5.1 A joint LGA-DH letter has been distributed confirming that staff transferring to local government will retain NHS pension rights. A joint task-and-finish group looking at pension issues for new starters and others has been established and is making progress.
 - 5.2 A guide to the legal issues around pre-transfer working arrangements for co-located staff was issued on 7 June.
 - 5.3 Discussions are continuing on arrangements for the appointment of Directors of Public Health before and after the transfer. The LGA has had constructive dialogue with the faculty of Public Health to influence its guidance note.
6. LGA officers have been attending a variety of workshops and seminars to provide advice on the next steps.

Universal Credit

7. The Workforce Team is working closely with the Programme Team that leads on the development of the Universal Credit system to ensure that the implications for significant numbers of local government employees currently working on housing benefit etc are clearly understood and that forward options are developed.

Managing a Changing Workforce

8. The Workforce team have delivered 9 out of the 11 planned workshops across regions in England and Wales, for councils to challenge them regarding how they are managing a changing workforce and developing the management competencies required to effectively plan and manage generational difference, engagement and performance.

Career Framework for Social Workers

9. The LGA Workforce team is now hosting the Career Framework Advisory Implementation Group alongside the Employer Standards for Social Workers. The profession has now agreed clear career stages to help social workers and employers plan and develop careers within social work. The Group will be running a workshop to look at the issues employers are experiencing and develop a model to help employers plan the development of their social work workforce.

Mutuals / Social enterprise

10. The Workforce team will be developing a series of case studies in partnership with the Office for people management. In addition meetings are progressing with cabinet office to discuss the barriers to successful employee-led spinouts identified by local authorities.

School teachers

11. The School Teachers' Review Body is considering evidence from statutory consultees to inform its report on its latest remit on making pay more market facing and making greater links between pay and performance, which is due for publication on 28 September 2012.
12. Evidence from the National Employers' Organisation for School Teachers can be found here: <http://www.lge.gov.uk/lge/core/page.do?pageId=119393>

Fire

13. The National Employers' will consider a pay claim in respect of uniformed fire service employees when the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services next meets on 7 June 2012. The claim makes reference to the RPI figure available for that meeting. The relevant figure is now known, 3.5%.
14. On 24 May, the Fire Minister laid a Written Ministerial Statement in the House of Commons setting out progress on fire service pension reforms and, in particular, the publication of a proposed Final Agreement for reforms to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme.

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