

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

Pensions

1. The employer consultation on the design for the new Local Government Pension Scheme has resulted in overwhelming support for the proposals agreed by the LGA and the local government trade unions. Responses were received from over 500 employers (accounting for 50% of the scheme membership), and 93% supported the proposals.
2. The three largest local government unions also voted overwhelmingly to accept the proposals and we have now asked government to proceed directly to a statutory consultation to implement our agreed proposals.
3. Final discussions are now taking place between the LGA, the trade unions and Government to agree proposals in respect of future scheme governance and cost management.
4. The Public Service Pensions Bill due in the middle of September will include legislation to implement the reformed Teachers Pension Scheme despite the two largest teaching unions remaining opposed to the deal set out in the Heads of Agreement.

Soulbury Committee

5. In July the Officers' Side of the Soulbury Committee submitted a claim for *'a significant increase on all Soulbury pay scale points and the London allowances from 1 September 2012...'* and for *'joint discussions leading to joint guidance in respect of a number of conditions of service issues, namely, annual leave and time off in lieu, car user and mileage allowances, job evaluation, workload, and professional registration fees for educational psychologists'*.
6. The National Employers are undertaking a consultation on this claim and will formally respond to the Officers' Side when the Soulbury Committee meets next month.

Local Government Services

7. As part of the LGS Employers' Side's wish to reach agreement on reform of pay and terms and conditions, a number of key meetings have taken place in the past few weeks. The LGA's Chairman and Chief Executive met with UNISON's General Secretary, Dave Prentis, as well as subsequent officer-led discussions.
8. The Trade Union Side has indicated that it is willing to engage in more formal talks with the Employers, but both sides acknowledge the huge amount of work ahead. Colleagues will be kept informed of developments.

Fire

9. The Employees' Side of the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services entered a claim in March for an increase in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI) figure available in June. That figure was 3.5%. The Employers' Side considered the claim when the National Joint Council (NJC) met in June. In doing so, Employer

members were mindful of a number of issues including; the financial challenges facing fire authorities; economic pressures on the workforce; the Government's current public sector pay policy; a desire for reform of terms and conditions; and the current position for local authority employees.

10. Taking all factors into account, members indicated to the Employees' Side that they would be minded to make some level of pay award linked to commitments in respect of reform of conditions of service.
11. Since June discussion has continued and it is hoped that a mutually satisfactory conclusion to the negotiations will be reached shortly.

School teachers

12. The Department for Education has stated that the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) will report to the Secretary of State by the end of October 2012, and not 28 September as set out in the original remit. The issues covered in its report will be those set out at the last Councillors' Forum meeting – local pay and making greater links between pay and performance.
13. The next remit is will be later in 2012. This will ask the STRB to consider and make recommendations in respect of a post-pay freeze pay award for teachers (from September 2013). It may also refer other issues for their consideration.

Coroners

14. Agreement has been reached in the Joint Negotiating Committee for Coroners that a pay award will not be applied for 2012.

Public Health Workforce Issues

15. Negotiations at a national level have produced agreement that all staff transfers to local government will be carried out using transfer schemes, which give affected staff TUPE-like protections on transfer. Discussions are on-going about options for pension provision after the transfer, for staff who move jobs/sectors and for new starters.
16. The LGA has been involved in discussions about the final shape of statutory guidance on the appointment of Directors of Public Health, which is due to be issued shortly.
17. The LGA has launched a video podcast discussing good practice in dealing with the public health transition, and are running a national conference in October in partnership with the NHS.

Universal Credit

18. The Workforce Team is working closely with other colleagues to clarify the legal situation around the potential for transfer of displaced benefits administration staff to the new bodies that will administer universal credit.

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