

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

Pensions

1. The Public Service Pensions Bill received royal ascent on Friday 26th April and will form the primary legislative framework for the reformed LGPS and Teachers Scheme. The LGA, working with local government trade unions was successful in lobbying for a number of significant amendments to the Bill as it passed through its various stages in the House.
2. Work continues on regulations to implement the new LGPS from 2014 with a consultations on both the benefit and transitional regulations currently underway and a further consultation on governance regulations expected before the end of May.
3. Discussions continue with HM Treasury to finalise arrangements for a dual process cost management system. This will consist of the process agreed by the LGA and trade unions to incrementally manage total costs to 19.5% plus a HMT 'backstop' process which will manage a yet undisclosed employer cost cap on a different basis. This situation is not ideal and may lead to difficulties if the two processes clash.

Local Government Services

4. The National Employers met on the 24.4.2013 and in view of there being no prospects of achieving any reform to terms and conditions the Employers made the following final offer to the unions:
 - 4.1. 1.0% on all pay points with effect from 1 April 2013
 - 4.2. the deletion of pay point 4 with effect from 1 October 2013*
 - 4.2.1. Spinal Column Point 4 (SCP4) is currently £6.30 per hour, which is just 11p above the National Minimum Wage (NMW) of £6.19. The Government announced on 15 April that the NMW is to increase to £6.31 on 1 October 2013. Therefore, applying the 1.0% offer to SCP4 would further reduce the differential to just 5p per hour, which the Employers consider to be an undesirable situation.
5. In deciding to make this final offer, the Employers took into account:
 - 5.1. the financial parameters set by councils
 - 5.2. the strongly-held view that a fourth consecutive year of no pay increase was not acceptable
 - 5.3. and that in order for all employees to receive a pay increase a national settlement is necessary

Public Health Workforce Transition

6. Monitoring of the post-transfer situation continues and early indications are that events happened smoothly and that transferred staff are bedding-in well. There are plenty of detailed queries to handle but they are technical in nature and Directors of Public Health especially seem to have developed good relationships with HR teams in many

places. Many types of council seem to have found the final transfer scheme to be an advantageous document. Work is continuing especially to develop a good national relationship with Public Health England so that advice and information can be provided for councils on on-going issues. An important next step is the publication of the Public Health Workforce Strategy which identifies some key responsibilities for the LGA on behalf of the sector.

Pay progression

7. Members will have noted that in the recent budget, the Chancellor outlined a move away from remaining automatic pay increment structures in the civil service. The announcement has prompted renewed thinking about pay progression systems in local government. The strategy team is beginning a programme including research to refresh and renew the LGA guidance on pay progression.

Fire

8. The NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services is currently working on two joint reviews. The first relates to reform of pay and terms and conditions and the National Employers' approach has been informed by detailed preparatory work with its professional advisers (through the Advisory Forum) and the view of the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA). Joint discussion has commenced with the intention of concluding the review by June. The second review relates to identification of an appropriate mileage rate for Grey Book staff. The Employers' aspiration is to move to HMRC rates and negotiations are continuing.
In addition, we continue to support fire authorities seeking to secure change at local level to terms and conditions and/or putting in place new shift systems. This is through the provision of technical advice and guidance, a confidential conciliation service (provided jointly through the NJC on request from both parties) and the provision of joint industrial relations training at local level.

School Teachers

9. The 2013 School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) has been published and will come into force on 1 September 2013. It contains a number of new provisions, most significantly those relating to differential performance-related pay progression.
10. The School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) will publish its recommendations on the teacher pay award for 2013/14 at the end of May. The STPCD will be amended prior to September 2013 to reflect any pay award.
11. The Secretary of State has issued the STRB with a new remit covering (a) the pay framework for school leaders, (b) the provisions for allowances, other pay flexibilities and safeguarding and (c) the framework for non-pay conditions of service. NEOST has been invited to submit written evidence to the STRB by 18 June.

Youth and Community

12. The JNC Youth and Community Trade Union Side submitted its pay and conditions claim for 2013 in March. The main elements of the claim were for '*A substantial rise on all grades and allowances from September 2013*' and for the '*removal of the bottom pay*

points, so that the starting salary point for a Youth Support Worker would be Pay Point 5'. A process of consultation with local authorities is still taking place and the outcome of LGS NJC negotiations is awaited. The National Employers were therefore unable to formally respond to the Trade Union Side at the meeting of the JNC on 22 April. A formal response to the claim will be sent shortly and this will reaffirm the Employers' objective of reform of the national machinery.

New ways of working including social enterprises

13. We are preparing to run an event, in partnership with the Cabinet office, to provide further information for Councils who wish to support their employees through the process of setting up a social enterprise. The event will be held at Local Government House on the 25.6.2013 and is provisionally titled 'How to empower your workforce to deliver services through mutuals'.

Layers and spans of Control

14. The Workforce Strategy team are currently rolling out this Organisational tool in Hillingdon Council. The Layers and Spans offer is proving popular amongst councils and we are also rolling out the LGA offer to Wales and Northern Ireland.

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