

## **Workforce Board: Annual Review of the Year**

### **NEGOTIATIONS**

1. An agreement for a pay award of 1 per cent was reached for the Fire Service within the parameters given by fire authorities. A measure of reform to terms and conditions was achieved through an agreement to move car mileage payments to the levels recommended by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).
2. For Local Government Services the last year has seen a thorough debate on employer priorities for pay negotiations and reform to terms and conditions. The National Employers have now sent a clear message that reform of terms and conditions cannot be achieved nationally at the current time. At the time of writing, Unison has accepted the employers' offer of 1 per cent on pay for 2013/14 and the outcomes of the GMB's and Unite's consultations are awaited.
3. For school teachers, the National Employers made a number of recommendations to the School Teacher Review Body (STRB) on changes to national conditions and in particular on establishing a closer relationship between pay and performance. Almost all the points made by the employers were accepted by the STRB in its recommendation to central government.
4. In addition the team has continued to provide a wide range of expert advice, both on employment law and conditions of service issues, including public health and the implementation of Universal Credit.

### **STRATEGY**

#### **Future workforce**

5. In line with wider LGA work on the future shape of local government, a series of successful regional workshops were held with the Society of Local Authority Chief Executive's (SOLACE) and the Public Sector People Managers' Association (PPMA) to explore the future of the workforce and the support needs of councils. The wide range of ideas generated by the chief executives and others involved will help shape the individual and joint work of the three organisations.

#### **Public Health**

6. Public health staff moved smoothly into local government thanks to intensive negotiations involving the workforce team. The final terms of the transfer gave considerable flexibility to councils as they think about future terms and conditions. A good relationship with Public Health England has been developed to ensure that councils continue to receive the advice and support they need, especially on employing senior medically qualified staff.

#### **Skills for local Government**

7. LGA Workforce team has a new joint initiative with Skills for Local Government and Birmingham City Council which provides councils with support on planning their future

workforce in times of austerity. The offer of support gives councils access to bespoke advice and guidance and a free on-line assessment questionnaire.

#### **Job evaluation**

8. A complete review of the advice and guidance provided in support of councils using the NJC JE scheme has been largely completed. The scheme will be easier to use and takes account of changes in jobs and the experience of equal pay.

#### **Pay benchmarking**

9. The LGA has joined the consortium of regional employers that developed the e-pay check pay benchmarking service. The service is a shared effort across the sector to provide access to up-to-date data on pay rates for key jobs. It operates on a low-cost basis. The LGA will help in encouraging participation and in planning the next stages of development of the service.

#### **New ways of working including social enterprise**

10. A number of case studies have been developed and a series of regional and national workshops have been held all with the aim of providing practical assistance to councils on the workforce aspects of social enterprises, ensuring they are not seen as a barrier to change.

#### **PENSIONS**

11. An agreement on a reformed Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) design was substantially backed by both employers and employees.
12. In partnership with local government unions we were able to persuade the government to significantly amend the public service pensions bill as it passed through parliament.
13. The pension elements of the transfer of public health function were agreed between LGA, Department of Health and NHS trade unions and local authorities were supported through the implementation period.
14. We successfully supported councils and schools in implementing automatic enrolment legislation.
15. We worked in collation with other national and international social partners to influence EU pensions policy.

#### **WORKFORCE TEAM PRIORITIES FOR THE COMING YEAR**

##### **Assisting local organisational and workforce development**

16. The new-look strategy and intervention team (which draws together advisory work with direct consultancy) will work directly with as many councils as resources allow as well as developing toolkits for change. We will continue to work with SOLACE and PPMA on supporting councils to address current and future workforce challenges through relevant and valued national activity.

17. The key issues that we need to help councils with include:

- 17.1. Planning for further reduction in numbers of posts in response to 2015/16 spending review linked to improved workforce planning and demand assessment.
- 17.2. Developing alternative forms of service delivery, especially social enterprises and mutual.
- 17.3. Modernising pay progression systems.
- 17.4. Rationalising management structures.

**Pay and negotiations**

18. Assessing priorities for pay over the next year, with a particular focus on the lower end of the pay spine, linked to relationship with the minimum wage and developments around the living wage.
19. Developing and providing assistance to councils for local negotiations over “national” terms and conditions set out in part 2 of the Green Book, such as sick pay.
20. Seeking to reduce the number of smaller negotiating bodies to improve efficiency.

**Pensions**

21. Implementation planning for LGPS2014 administration covering member communications, HR and Payroll guidance.
22. Supporting administering authorities in setting up new LGPS governance arrangements and creating new national advisory board.
23. Assisting the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in developing options for new LGPS fund structures.
24. Assisting the Department for Education (DfE) and DCLG in setting up national advisory bodies for Teachers and Firefighters Pension Schemes.
25. Working with trade unions, Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF) to minimise the financial impact of the Pensions Bill in particular the ending of contracting out.
26. Continuing to monitor pensions developments in Europe.

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