

## Workforce Board – report by Cllr Jim McMahon (Chair)

### Pensions

1. The LGA responded to HM Treasury's consultation Freedom and Choice in Pensions supporting the restriction transfers from the LGPS to defined contribution schemes and continues to work on a response to DCLG's consultation on structural reform: 'Local Government Pension Scheme: Opportunities for collaboration, cost savings and efficiencies'. A further consultation in draft governance regulations which will include the requirement for local pension boards is due very soon.

### Local Government Services Pay 2014

2. UNISON announced on 23 June the results of its ballot for strike action following their rejection of the Employers' full and final pay offer. The results are:
3. Total number of votes cast in the ballot: 85,020 (14.1%)  
Total number **in favour** of strike action: 49,836 (58.7%)  
Total number **against** strike action: 35,062 (41.3%)  
Total number of spoiled voting papers: 122
4. UNISON has confirmed that its members will be taking industrial action on 10 July 2014.
5. The results of GMB's and Unite's strike ballots are due to be announced on 1 July 2014.

### School Teachers

6. The School Teachers' Review Body has recommended a 1% uplift to the minima and maxima of all the pay ranges and allowances in the national pay framework. This is the first year that the recommendation on the award has not specified a nationally determined uplift to all salaries and allowances in payment, rather leaving schools to determine the extent of any uplift between the minima and maxima of the ranges. NEOST will respond to the consultation currently underway.

### Fire

7. Following receipt of a claim, employer members of the fire service negotiating body that covers employees from firefighter to middle manager levels decided to offer an across the board pay increase of 1.0%.
8. In response, the Fire Brigades Union and the Fire Officers Association have indicated that they will each now consult their respective members.

**Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS)**

9. The build-up to the transfer of benefit fraud and investigation services and staff to the new SFIS service continues apace with phase 1 authorities due to go live in July. The workforce team is now heavily involved in discussions with Department of Work and Pensions, the trade unions and other national partners about key HR issues. The main aim is to ensure that local government staff transferring out receive similar protections and treatment to staff transferring in, like the recent public health transfer. The team provides updates when necessary to councils. Recent detailed discussions have centred on the process for selecting staff in scope for transfer and the "measures" which DWP proposes to vary non-contractual terms and conditions and emulate other aspects of existing staff contracts.

**Universal Credit: update on staff transfer**

10. The DWP have confirmed to the LGA that they have not yet made a formal decision on whether TUPE will apply to the transfer of council benefit staff to the DWP on the implementation of Universal Credit. However, they will be reviewing options for staff transfers following their review of the North West pilots. The results of the review are expected late summer, and the DWP have committed to engaging with the LGA and other key stakeholders before reaching any decisions on staff transfer. The LGA's position on behalf of councils in that process will be that staff should transfer on a TUPE/TUPE-like basis, with appropriate protections in place for councils and their staff.

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