

Pension Update

Members should have received an update from the Public Sector Pensions Authority (PSPA), explaining that the Isle of Man Teachers' Pension Scheme (IoM TPS) will not be changing and that no future changes will be made without full consultation and negotiation. Any future changes will not be applied retrospectively.

Whilst the NASUWT welcomes the commitment to consult and negotiate on any changes, the Union's position has not changed, in that before talks take place regarding reform of the IoM TPS, the PSPA must convince the NASUWT of the need for change. Members should also be assured that the NASUWT will not agree to any changes to the IoM TPS without full consultation with members.

The NASUWT is aware that some members have concerns regarding what they feel is the breaking of the 'link' to the UK Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS). The Isle of Man Scheme and the UK Schemes have always been separate entities. The only link was that the IoM Scheme borrowed the rules of the UK Scheme, nothing more. As such, it offered little security against Tynwald-imposed changes, as Tynwald could have changed its rules at any time. However, it did allow for UK-imposed changes to occur, with little recourse for Isle of Man teachers.

The NASUWT is also aware that some members are concerned by a perceived lack of consultation over the PSPA's decision not to follow the UK changes and the NASUWT's support for this position. The PSPA's decision means that there will be no detrimental changes to the Scheme, in stark contrast to what has occurred in the UK. Had the NASUWT not supported this, by default it would have been an acceptance that the detrimental UK changes could be imposed.

The NASUWT is still awaiting a position statement from the Department for Education and Children (DEC) which will be circulated to members on receipt.

Pay

Teachers' pay in the Isle of Man has been historically linked to the UK School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) pay scales. The Coalition Government has introduced flexibilities into the STPCD which have included removal of pay scales. The latest School Teachers' Review Body Report has taken these flexibilities further, essentially leaving the decision regarding any pay uplift for teachers, other than those on the minimum of the main pay range, entirely to schools. As such, there is no longer a clear path for the DEC to follow, especially as the reference points have now potentially become meaningless.

The NASUWT asserts that whilst parity with the UK must be maintained as a minimum, given the challenges that exist around recruitment and retention, the Department should use this opportunity to enhance Isle of Man teachers' pay in the same way as the Channel Islands, have done. The NASUWT will make representations on this issue.

Education Bill

Members will be aware that the Isle of Man Government intends to put a new education bill before Tynwald.

An exact date for this has not yet been set, but it is likely this will need to occur by October if the bill is to be signed into law before the dissolution of Tynwald next year.

A draft bill has not yet been published, but when a draft is released the NASUWT will ensure that the views of members are obtained and fed into the consultation process.

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