

Local Government workforce and teachers' bargaining groups and Pensions Boards

Strategic Development

This report seeks approval by Leaders of the nominations to the Employers' side on the 4 workforce bargaining groups and on the statutory Pensions Boards and associated advisory boards.

Summary and Recommendations

Since the local government elections in May, COSLA has begun the repopulation of the many groups on which COSLA has representation by elected members.

The last Convention meeting dealt with a number of these groups, and this report addresses some of the final groups requiring attention. The groups relate to pensions and local government's bargaining machinery for pay and employment terms and conditions.

This paper invites Leaders to:

- i. Note the vacancies in each group;
- ii. Agree that Group Leaders collate nominations for these groups and COSLA advise Leaders of the final memberships once they are populated; and
- iii. Agree that COSLA passes on the nominations to the various groups in order to facilitate upcoming meetings.

References

Previous reports on bargaining groups and pensions boards' membership

- Local Govt. Pensions Board - Resources and Capacity Executive Group – 5 March 2015
- Teachers Pensions Board – 23 February 2015
- Bargaining groups – Strategic Human Resources Management Executive Group – 6 December 2012

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August 2017



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1. COSLA has a key role as representing the Employers' side in discussions on local government and teachers' pensions and in representing our views on pay and conditions with the 4 workforce bargaining groups.

Current COSLA Position

2. When COSLA populated these groups in the past, nominations came from the Resources and Capacity; Strategic Human Resources Management; and Education, Children and Young People Executive Groups.

What is changing

3. As two of the above Executive Groups no longer exist, Group Leaders have been invited to nominate members for these groups. The following representatives have been sought:
 - Finance conveners or members with an interest in pensions issues may be interested in joining one of the pensions boards
 - Elected members with an interest in pay, conditions and employee relations may be interested in joining one of the bargaining groups.
4. Having elected member representation on these groups is essential. The pensions advisory boards are statutory bodies which require employer representation; The elected members on the Local Government Scheme Board are supported by COSLA officers who share the secretariat with trade unions. The elected members on the Teachers' pension Board are supported by an officer representative from the Society of personnel and Development (SPDS)
5. Pay and employment terms and conditions are important issues for any organisation, and elected member representation on the bargaining groups strengthens the local government 'employers side' in negotiations on position in pay and conditions with trade unions.
6. The need to populate these groups was discussed at the Leadership Sounding Board on 17 August. It is our hope that nominations will be available on the day of the Leaders meeting on 25 August, however it may be that it takes some of the Group Leaders a bit longer to get all the names required.
7. Nominations are being sought, based on a party political allocation, although there is no formal requirement for a political structure of our nominations in any of these groups. We have also asked Group Leaders to take into account gender balance, on the same basis.

Proposed COSLA Position

8. The details of the various groups and the vacancies within each group are as follows:

Pensions

- **Local Government Scheme Advisory Board** – this board deals with matters relating to the Local Government Pension Scheme. It is anticipated that this board will meet up to 4 times per year. The COSLA Employers' side is composed of 5 elected members on this Advisory Board, supported by COSLA officers. Cllr Jim Goodfellow (LAB) of East Lothian Council and Cllr Alasdair Rankin (SNP) of Edinburgh City Council have advised that they are happy to continue as representatives. COSLA nominations to the advisory board will receive a fixed term public appointment. There are currently 3 vacancies following the elections and Group Leaders have been asked to nominate on the following basis – 1 SNP, 1 Conservative, 1 Independent.
- **Scottish Teachers' Pension Board** – this board deals with matters relating to the Scottish teachers pensions scheme. The Pension Board is a statutory board and it is anticipated that it will meet up to four times a year at the SPPA offices in Tweedbank. COSLA nominations to the board will receive a fixed term public appointment. The COSLA the Employers' side, is composed of 3 elected members on the board to represent employer interests, supported by one officer currently a representative of SPDS. All 3 positions are vacant following the elections and Group leaders have been asked to nominate on the following basis – 1 SNP, 1 Labour, 1 Conservative
- **Scottish Teachers Pensions Advisory Board** – this board acts to provide advice on matters relating to pension scheme design, including the desirability of changes to scheme design and the implication of other policy issues. As with the Pension Board above, this is a statutory board and is expected to meet up to 4 times per year, depending on need. The board currently mirrors the arrangements for the SNCT and other representatives on the board come from Scottish Government and the teachers' side. The COSLA Employers' side is composed of 7 elected members as representatives on the board, supported by COSLA officers. COSLA nominations to the advisory board will receive a fixed term public appointment. Cllr Gillian Renwick (SNP) of East Dunbartonshire Council and Cllr Jim Goodfellow (LAB) of East Lothian Council have advised that they are happy to continue as representatives on the Advisory Board. Therefore, 5 vacancies need to be filled and Group Leaders have been asked to nominate on the following basis – 1 SNP, 1 Labour, 2 Conservative, 1 Independent.

Bargaining Groups

- **Scottish Joint Council Steering Group (SJC)** – this body negotiates pay and conditions for the local government workforce in Scotland. The COSLA Employers' side is composed of 12 elected members to serve on the SJC Steering Group. The Employers' side will include Cllr Gail MacGregor, the COSLA Resources Spokesperson. The remaining 11 vacancies need to be filled and Group Leaders have been asked to nominate on the following basis – 3 SNP, 3 Labour, 2 Conservative, 1 Independent, 1 Liberal Democrat, 1 Green.
- **SJNC Chief Officers** – this group negotiates pay and conditions for Scottish local government chief officers. The COSLA Employers' side, is composed of 6 elected members to serve on SJNC Chief Officers to represent employers' interests, led by Cllr

MacGregor. The remaining 5 vacancies to be filled and Group Leaders have been asked to nominate on the following basis – 2 SNP, 1 Labour, 1 Conservative, 1 Independent.

- **SJNC Craft** – this group negotiates pay and conditions for Scottish local government craft operatives. The COSLA Employers' side is composed of 7 elected members to serve on the SJC Craft to represent employers' interests, led by Cllr MacGregor. There remain 6 vacancies to be filled and Group Leaders have been asked to nominate on the following basis – 2 SNP, 2 Labour, 1 Conservative and 1 Independent.
- **The Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT)** – this body negotiates pay and conditions for teachers and associated professionals. It is a tripartite body, consisting of Scottish Government, the teachers side and COSLA nominated elected members, representing employers' interests. There are 3 Joint Chairs of the SNCT and Cllr Gail MacGregor, as COSLA's recently appointed Resources spokesperson, will act as the Employers Joint Chair. The SNCT generally meets no more than 4 times a year, and venue/chair rotates on a tripartite basis. It is proposed that Cllr Stephen McCabe, COSLA's Children and Young People Spokesperson should also be a member. The remaining 6 places for the Employers' side require to be filled and Group Leaders have been asked to nominate on the following basis – 2 SNP, 1 Labour, 1 Conservative, 1 Independent and 1 Liberal Democrat.

Next Steps

9. As noted above in paragraphs 3 to 6, following discussion at the COSLA Leadership Sounding Board on 17 August, Group Leaders have been asked to provide nominations for each of these groups. Should Leaders agree to the nominations provided, COSLA will then move to formally advise the Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA), the trades union and Scottish Government sides of the various bargaining groups about the agreed nominations.

Conclusion

10. Leaders are invited to:
 - i. Note the vacancies in each group;
 - ii. Agree that Group Leaders collate nominations for these groups and COSLA advise Leaders of the final memberships once they are populated; and
 - iii. Agree that COSLA passes on the nominations to the various groups in order to facilitate upcoming meetings.

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