

23.04.18

**11 Deputy R.J. Ward of the Chair of the States Employment Board regarding an additional pay offer to education staff (OQ.63/2023)**

Will the chair of the States Employment Board state when the board made an additional pay offer to teachers and lecturers following their rejection of the original offer?

**Deputy K.L. Moore (Chair, States Employment Board):**

This is again for the Vice-Chair.

**The Connétable of St. John (Vice-Chair, States Employment Board - rapporteur):**

The 2 teaching trade unions received a formal offer of 7.9 per cent fully consolidated pay increase by letter on 3rd April. We have not yet received notification of the ballot arrangements for the formal offer from either of the 2 unions, which we requested in our letter, so we do not know if they have rejected or not. Prior to the formal letter, there were several discussions between the negotiating team and representatives setting out each other's positions. This was followed up by a letter on 10th January but that was not a formal offer. The first formal offer made to the unions was on 3rd April.

**4.11.1 Deputy R.J. Ward:**

When is the vice-chair - got that right this time - expecting to enter direct negotiations with the unions and teachers' representatives in order that we might move forward this situation?

**The Connétable of St. John:**

The States Employment Board have met with all of the trade unions from all of the representative bodies of our employees and plan to do so on a regular basis. That does not include discussions around pay. We did, however, meet as a States Employment Board last week and we have requested that the negotiating team make contact again with the union officials and we expect an update on Friday.

**4.11.2 Deputy L.V. Feltham:**

In his answer to the previous question, the vice-chair made a reference to pay awards having been I think part of the Government Plan process, so can he confirm if indeed the negotiating team does have any flexibility to negotiate?

**The Connétable of St. John:**

The negotiating team does have flexibility to negotiate within the envelope of the monies that have been voted for in the Government Plan. So, therefore, they have the flexibility. They also have the flexibility to look at different things, which may include holidays, may include sick leave, et cetera. So there is flexibility for the team. We have to balance various competing pressures. We consider the 7.9 per cent increase to be a fair offer and note that it has been accepted by teaching assistants, meal-time assistants and other professions who work alongside teachers, and we maintain that it is a fair offer.

**4.11.3 Deputy L.V. Feltham:**

A few years ago some of the negotiations revolved around gainsharing. Can the vice-chair let us know whether gainsharing is going to be part of those negotiations or not?

**The Connétable of St. John:**

When we recently met the teachers unions, not to talk about pay but to talk about other things, we discovered that there had been agreement in 2019 to look at the terms and conditions. These date back to 2013 and the States Employment Board have committed that this work must start in this school term for that work to be done. That may or may not include gainsharing; I would need to check.

**4.11.4 Deputy R.J. Ward:**

Can I ask the vice-chair whether, given that the negotiators obviously cannot negotiate extra money without taking it out of budgets, is that genuinely an ability to negotiate pay with the teaching unions or is this just another smokescreen as has happened so many times in previous years with iterations such as gainsharing and that terrible phrase “within the pay envelope”?

**The Connétable of St. John:**

I should have emphasised the words of the Minister for Children and Education earlier how we value our teachers and how in our meetings we have learnt about some of the pressures that they face. Within that envelope the negotiating team and the negotiators have the ability to award different levels to different members of the teams and, therefore, some staff could have received up to 12 per cent and others are receiving around 6 per cent. It is worth noting that it is about a whole package that our employees receive and teachers still benefit from a final salary pension scheme, which was removed from other professions and also removed from teaching in the U.K..