

19-21 Broad Street | St Helier
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Address

31 May 2019

Dear xxxx,

Teachers' Pay Review

I am writing to you to provide an update on our negotiations with the teaching unions regarding the pay review covering 2018, 2019 and 2020.

It is important that I provide you with this detailed update, not least because negotiations are now at their most delicate phase as we move towards – what I am sure we all hope will be – a satisfactory conclusion. I am also aware that at times there has been some misleading media coverage, which is unhelpful, since the talks, under the auspices of the Jersey Advisory and Conciliation Service (JACS), were intended to be confidential.

On 29 May JACS, with the full support of the States Employment Board (SEB), wrote to both our teaching unions – NASUWT and NEU – to set out the full and up-to-date position reached in negotiations. I have attached this document for your information.

Alongside affirming SEB's commitment to reach a settlement to these long-running disputes, you will see that it also sets out next steps in negotiations. SEB's negotiating team have been meeting NASUWT in an all-day meeting today (Friday, 31 May). NEU were also invited, but would not agree to field a negotiating team ahead of 5 June, when further talks will hopefully take place with both unions around a single table. Teachers are in a single pay group, regardless of union affiliation, and we are seeking to unite the teaching unions around a single negotiated outcome, because divisions serve no-one's interests.

SEB's ability to make offers for 2018 and 2019 at or above inflation has been impacted by the financial constraints to which the States Assembly had previously committed in approving the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2015-19. That's why, in negotiations, the idea of freeing up more money from 1 January 2020 was put forward, and why we are now in intensive discussions about how further funds over and above the current offer can be identified.

So, where we are up to now is that negotiations are at an advanced stage with the two teaching unions, with meetings taking place this week and next.

We have held more than 20 meetings with teaching unions since January to seek agreement on pay, and we have made several modified offers over this time, having listened to their views. The current offer on the table is for:

- a consolidated increase in pay from 1 January 2018 of 2.0%, and an unconsolidated one-off payment of 1.1%
- a further consolidated increase of 2.0% from 1 January 2019, and an unconsolidated payment of 1.0%

- from 1 January 2020 a consolidated increase of the September 2019 Retail Prices (All-Items) Index plus 1.3%. The inflation rate is currently forecast to be 3.1% although the actual rate will be used, guaranteeing a permanent increase to pay of 1.3% above inflation – 4.4% on the current forecast. You will know that the 2018 and 2019 elements have already been paid. For a teacher on grade 5 (around half of all teachers) this is worth a permanent increase of £4,396 over the three years 2018 to 2020, plus one-off cash of £1,103.

Teachers' unions rejected this offer earlier this year and since then we have been working with them to see what can be done to narrow or bridge the gap between the unions' claims and the employer's offer.

We have put forward the concept of a 50-50 'gain share', whereby efficiencies and savings from educational reforms, which also contribute to improvements in educational outcomes, can be evenly divided between teachers (as higher pay) and the employer (as sustainable savings) for all-round benefit. In this way, SEB expects to be able to offer a higher consolidated pay increase payable from 1 January 2020.

We are still negotiating the detail of the gain share arrangement, but central to our thinking is that this will provide a means by which everyone can contribute to educational reform in direct and active support of this Government's unanimously-agreed Common Strategic Policy, a primary focus of which is to put children first. I would invite you to contribute your own ideas on reforms that could generate efficiencies.

As the employer, SEB is committed to creating and maintaining an environment within which all teachers are able to deliver high education standards, and in which teachers feel valued and are supported and motivated to give of their best.

I recognise that this process has been difficult for all parties, and that the uncertainty over pay might have caused you worry and concern. We are committed to reaching an agreement, without further delay or disruption, which is sustainable and affordable, and we will continue to work to achieve this end. This is an absolute priority for me, for the States Employment Board and, I believe, for teachers and your unions.

I will report on progress as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,



Charlie Parker
Chief Executive and Head of the Public Service