

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 30th JUNE 2009**

Question

Will the Minister inform members what changes have been made to teachers' pension terms and conditions for new entrants and state how this differs from the UK equivalent?

Does the Minister agree with the statement of the Comptroller and Auditor General, supported by PAC, that

“terms and benefits must be broadly equivalent to those of the mainland in order to recruit staff.”?

Does the Minister anticipate recruitment difficulties given the recently negotiated reduced pension terms?

Answer

The Jersey Teachers' Superannuation Fund introduced a new benefit structure in April 2007. The New Members part of the Scheme included numerous changes, some a betterment of terms, for instance the Death-in-Service lump sum was increased from once annual salary to twice annual salary. However, the main alteration was a decrease in the accrual rate from 60ths to 80ths (of final salary for each year of service). This differs from the UK equivalent which has retained accrual rates of 60ths.

In principle we do agree that “terms and benefits must be broadly equivalent to those of the mainland in order to recruit staff”. Nonetheless, since the 1987 restructure of the Public Employee Contributory Retirement Scheme (PECRS) the pension situation for all other States employees does not compare favourably with corresponding schemes in the UK. However, the Comptroller and Auditor General made the point that recent reforms in the UK mean the gap is closing.

The situation regarding any recruitment difficulties is being carefully monitored by ESC and at the present time difficulties are only experienced where there is a general shortage nationally. Whilst it is true to say that some potential UK recruits have withdrawn their interest in moving to Jersey as a teacher because of the pension issue, it is also true to say that this has not resulted in any vacancy not being filled.