

JAN 2009

N.U.T. NEWSLETTER

Tameside Teachers Association/ 0161 342 2566

STATE PENSIONS UNDER FIRE

The current economic crisis has led some politicians to turn their attention to the 'generous' pensions provided to public sector workers.

Shadow Tory Treasury minister Baroness Noakes said: "It is not sustainable to have gold-plated public pensions in existence when the private sector largely has defined contribution. I don't have an immediate solution other than the issue has to be looked at again."

The Liberal Democrat are pressing the government to introduce an independent body to review public sector pensions - The Independent Public Sector Pensions Commission.

Liberal Peer Lord Kirkwood recently tabled an amendment to the Pensions Bill to this effect. The body would assess the terms and affordability of public sector pensions and report findings to Parliament. There have been various estimates of Public Sector pension liabilities with some putting the figure as high as £1 trillion. Such liabilities, since the schemes are largely unfunded, are picked up by the taxpayer.

Any talks of reviews will inevitably result in our pensions being reduced. Instead of levelling their criticisms at the speculative financiers who set off the recession, it is the teachers and council workers who are now being targeted to pay the price for the crisis.

What politicians don't seem to recognise is that historically those who work for the public sector are paid less than their counterparts in the private sector. It is the knowledge that a decent pension will be provided in retirement for public sector workers that has kept so many people in public service. To now remove or to undermine that basic right is a betrayal of everything successive governments have promised and a denial of the value of teachers and other public sector workers' contribution to society.

2009

**HAPPY NEW
YEAR TO
ALL OUR
MEMBERS
IN
TAMESIDE**

AGM

**Wednesday
28 January**

4.30 pm

**Dukinfield
Town Hall**

Buffet

Commemorating the Life and Service of Mike Custance.

As you are aware, Mike Custance, Divisional Secretary of Tameside NUT, tragically died in office in March of last year. Had Mike lived to reach retirement age it is virtually certain that the Association would have made him an Honorary Life Member. The Committee believes that the service of one who gave so much of his life to the NUT should be suitably honoured but if other Associations have done something similar in these circumstances we have not found out how and are having to 'roll our own'.

The Committee is currently exploring the possibility of the Association presenting a selection of hardback books dedicated to one or more of Mike's interests to the Library at Stoke Rochford Hall, the NUT's training establishment near Grantham. While discussions are still at a very early stage we would like to include a small plaque identifying the section, a brief biography of Mike and perhaps invite his family to a formal opening.

The Committee can think of three themes that could form a basis for the collection

Folk rock music particularly Fairport Convention and Steeleye Span

Mike's religious beliefs

Links between Christianity and Socialism

If members can suggest titles that would fit these themes or anybody who knew Mike well can suggest other themes the Committee would be very grateful.

The Committee intends to finance this project from Association funds and though no formal decision has been made about cost the sum of £500 has been mentioned in discussions. If individual members wish to make financial contributions these will be used to enlarge the collection rather than reduce the contribution from Association funds.

Please use the FREEPOST address to send suggestions or donations (Cheques should be payable to 'Tameside Teachers Association (NUT)'. You can also make suggestions by e-mail to secretary@tameside.nut.org.uk

Guidance on Lesson Planning

Despite the introduction of Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time, lesson planning still generates excessive workload in some schools.

Much of this work has been driven by fear that teachers will be called to account by OFSTED and must have evidence of what has been taught. Local authority advisors, inspectors and School Improvement Partners (SIPs) can also place immense pressure on head teachers to require of teachers detailed planning which is, in fact, unnecessary. Head teachers themselves can sometimes misinterpret what is expected of schools.

The guidance provides up-dated advice and protection to members on excessive demands for planning. It draws on the practical experience of NUT members in schools.

The guidelines are issued as a set of instructions which, if followed, will reduce or remove planning burdens. They are written in such a way as not to leave members feeling isolated, nor feeling constrained against using their professional judgements.

Use of the guidelines will

support, not hinder, members in their professional work.

The guidelines can be found on the Tameside NUT website under 'school circulars' at www.tamesideteachers.org

Classroom Too Cold?



NUT THERMOMETERS

As temperatures drop and some parts of the school become colder teachers need to be aware of what is considered to be an acceptable working environment.

Following a recommendation by the Health and Safety Working Group, Tameside NUT are to provide each of its Health and Safety Reps in schools with an indoor, wall-mounted, thermometer with the NUT logo. The thermometers clearly indicate the minimum temperature of 18°C for classrooms under the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999, as well as NUT Policy on the maximum comfortable working temperature (26°C).

The NUT's briefing documents, 'Heating in Schools', and, 'High Classroom Temperatures', are available from the health and safety alphabetical briefings section of www.teachers.org.uk

Tameside Teachers Association

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We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.tamesideteachers.info

QuickTime™ and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

www.teachers.org.uk

Annual General Meeting 2009

The AGM of Tameside Teachers' Association takes place each year in January. It is the members opportunity to influence the running of the union in Tameside.

This year the meeting will be held at Dukinfield Town Hall on Wednesday 28th January at 4.30 and a buffet will be provided. The format will take the shape of reports from various committees that the Association is involved with, a financial report, the election of officers and committee (see below*) and the presentation of long service badges to members who have been in the union for over 25yrs.

Come along to the meeting and become involved in running of the Association. Officers and committee members are elected at this meeting. Nominations for all positions are welcome from members. Please ensure that you have a seconder for any nominations you wish to make.

*The current officers of the Association are;-

President – Ann Slater

Vice President – Vacant

General Secretary – Derek Clarke

Assistant Secretary (Casework) – Pat Davies

Assistant Secretary and Membership Sec – Caryl Hughes

Treasurer - Norman Jones

Equalities Officer – Ann Slater

Young Teachers Representative – Ben Miskell

Retired Teachers Representative – John Rubery

There are also 10 Committee posts to be filled. In addition there is a Health & Safety Representative, Union Learning Representative, Press Officer, Minutes Secretary, four delegates to Annual Conference, Tameside Trades Union Council, Tameside Teachers Consultative Committee (TCC). NWNUT Regional Council, Newsletter Editor, Tameside Racial Equality Committee.

If you are interested in **all** aspects of education come along and become involved in your union.