

Staff and Pensions Committee

Teachers Pay - Review of Scale Points 6a and 6b

14 June 2021

Recommendation

1. That the Committee approves the amalgamation of points 6a and 6b of the Teachers Main Pay Scale into a single point 6, to be paid at the current scale 6b level, with effect from September 2021.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Warwickshire County Council, in its role as the employer, sets a model approach for pay which we ask all maintained schools to adopt to ensure consistency of pay application. Although schools have discretion to apply a different pay approach we are not aware of any maintained schools in Warwickshire that are doing this. Decisions around teachers' pay and terms and conditions require Staff and Pensions approval.
- 1.2 As part of the 2020 pay award for Teachers, the Government reintroduced advisory pay points on the main and upper pay scales with effect from September 2020.
- 1.3 Warwickshire's Teachers' pay policy already incorporates pay points on the main and upper pay scales which align in the main to the reintroduced advisory pay points. The one difference is that the Government's advisory pay points have a single point 6 on the main pay scale. Warwickshire has a point 6a and point 6b, these points having been a feature of the LGA modelled pay scales.
- 1.4 A report to Staff and Pensions meeting on 13 October 2020 recommended that Warwickshire did not amalgamate to a single point 6 for the 2020/2021 pay year. It was proposed that a review would be conducted to understand the financial impact and confer with Schools and neighbouring authorities. The Staff and Pensions Committee endorsed that recommendation.
- 1.5 This review has recently been completed. The review looked at the feasibility of amalgamating points 6a and 6b to a single point 6. The amalgamated point 6 would be paid at the higher value 6b scale point to mirror the Government's advisory pay point for 6. Scale point 6a would be retired and teachers currently at 6a would receive an increase in pay to the new value.
- 1.6 In light of the support of head teachers, the TU position and the approach adopted by other Local Authorities there is a compelling argument to amalgamate to a single scale point.
- 1.7 Whilst this is not necessarily a retention exercise assimilating the points will likely improve people's perception of fairness and equity.

- 1.8 A recommendation is therefore made to amalgamate points 6a and 6b to a single point 6 with a value of £36,961. This change brings Warwickshire pay scales in line with the Government's advisory pay scales.
- 1.9 There is no requirement for us to backdate as the pay points are advisory. Our position therefore is that the new arrangement will take place from 1 September 2021.

2. Review Findings

2.1 Warwickshire Headteachers

Consultation has been undertaken through the network of Consortia Chairs covering Warwickshire. The feedback received represented around 50% of schools and the feedback received has supported the amalgamation to a single point 6. The reasons for this include the fact that it will bring Warwickshire into line with surrounding authorities and to remove any confusion around the 2 points. Appendix 1 details the feedback received.

2.2 Neighbouring Local Authorities

Warwickshire is part of the West Midlands Employers Schools network. Through this network we have been able to establish that where neighbouring Authorities were operating points 6a and 6b they have amalgamated these in line with the Government's advisory pay points. These authorities include Coventry, Wolverhampton, Walsall, Stoke and Solihull.

- 2.3 The position regarding Warwickshire academies is mixed with some using a single point while others have retained the two points in line with Warwickshire.

2.4 Trade Union Position

The Trade Union do not agree with the current approach of having 6a and 6b. They appreciate the financial challenges that schools face but believe the current position should be addressed.

2.6 Wider context

The Government has announced a temporary pause to increasing public sector pay this year and the Government remit to the pay review body for teachers pay referenced this pay pause. It will be July before there is confirmation of any pay uplift applicable to teachers.

The amalgamation of the 2 points falls outside of the pay pause and we are not aware of anything that would prevent us assimilating the 2 points. The messaging would need to be well considered as those teachers currently at pay point 6a would receive an increase whilst others would not. The number of teachers at 6a represents 22.5% of all teachers.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 Currently 6a is £36,500 per annum and 6b is £36,961. The recommendation is to amalgamate these two points to the £36,961 which mirrors the advisory scale point 6.

- 3.2 There is no additional funding available to support this amalgamation. The financial plans currently being prepared and approved by schools assume the existing two points will be ongoing so there will be an impact on budgets if the points are amalgamated. However, the advice to schools is that to ensure their robustness plans should assume a 2% pay award from September 2021 which could support some of the additional costs, if the Government's plans for a temporary pause on increasing public sector pay this year is borne out.
- 3.3 Pay modelling completed at the end of March 2021 suggests that the cost to amalgamate to a single point 6 would be an additional 0.2% across all schools. Although some schools will see an increase about 0.2% others will see an increase below 0.2% as it will be dependent on staff structures in individual schools.
- 3.4 As well as teachers in schools, the local authority also employs teachers directly in services that are traded with schools. Of these only 3 are at 6a and all are employed in the Warwickshire Music Service.
- 3.5 The recommendation is that the amalgamation takes effect from 1st September 2021.

4. Environmental Implications

None

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 If the recommendation is accepted, it is proposed to implement the change from September 2021.

6. Appendix – Summary of Feedback Received

Background Papers

1. Staff and Pensions Paper 13 October 2020 Pay Award for Warwickshire County Council Employees on School Teachers Pay and Conditions

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s):
Other members:

Appendix - Consultation Feedback from Schools

Kenilworth Consortium	We all agreed that we are happy for 6a/6b to be amalgamated to form a single scale point 6!
South Leamington Consortia 8B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 6 heads were not aware that this existed so haven't been implementing this. · 2 heads were using this approach and are paying M6 teachers at the two rates, this is built into their financial forecasting · 2 heads remember it briefly being mentioned but haven't continued to implement it · 4 shared their view that their preference would be to amalgamate the two pay points 6A and 6B and have a single pay point for M6 · 6 didn't give a response to the consultation
Consortium 13	<p>Knowledge of 6a and 6b pay points ranged from being aware and using this, being aware and not relevant at the moment, and not being aware.</p> <p>Consensus was that it is desirable for Warwickshire's approach to be consistent with neighbouring counties.</p>
Consortium 11	Agreed that MS 6 a and b be merged into one MS point.
Consortium 7	All those present unanimously voted to merge 6a and 6b on the teachers pay scale.
North Leamington Group	The feeling is fairly resounding that the two point should be amalgamated - causes to much confusion.