



## LANCASHIRE UNISON CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT OUR PENSIONS

# NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE



**T**he Joint Statement agreed with the Local Government Association (LGA) - set the scope for new talks with the employers, which have now begun. Four meetings have been held with officers of the LGA, the Local Government Employers – formerly the Employers Organisation and – at one meeting – the ODPM civil

servants. The meetings have concentrated on establishing options for providing better protection for existing scheme members and an improved LGPS for the future. We have also looked in detail at the savings to be made from removing the 85 Rule and the 25% lump sum commutation.

As set out in the Joint Statement, UNISON's actuary AON, is also in the process of seeking to resolve outstanding differences over these issues with the government and LGPS fund actuaries. We are confident that sufficient funds are available to allow us to achieve our aims.

We will give you further updates as



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the talks progress and will be training activists and pension contacts in the LGPS so that they can help members understand any proposals coming out of the talks.

## Legal Challenge

At the same time, we are keeping our legal options open by proceeding with a judicial review against the Government. We are arguing that the Deputy Prime Minister erred in law in saying European age discrimination legislation made it necessary to remove the 85 Rule and therefore also ruled out full protection as an alternative for existing LGPS members. Our second argument is that the consultation on the draft Regulations was carried out on false premises because financial

calculations of costs of protection and savings from the Government Actuaries Department just didn't add up.

The judicial review process first requires a High Court judge to give permission for the case to proceed. This should happen in the next few weeks. If granted, the case will then be heard by the High Court on the basis of written submissions. If we win our case, the Order removing the 85 Rule will be quashed. Watch this space

## Campaigning

While the negotiations and legal process continue, we need to keep the pressure up on councillors and MP's to support our case. We have e-mailed them to inform them of

the Joint Statement and the new round of negotiations. We will be posting a new letter for you to send them on the web site. Don't forget...many of you will have new councillors who don't know the history of the dispute and councils with new leaderships. It is important that you try to meet them – or at least write – to let them know what we want.

## Recruiting

The first four months of 2006 have seen record levels of recruitment in UNISON among LGPS members. This is fantastic news, but we need to carry on recruiting to ensure that the employers and Government know that we are prepared to defend our pension now and all our terms and conditions in the future.

**Please circulate to non-members and encourage them to join.  
For an application form contact the Branch Office on  
01772 533072 or e-mail [unison@unison.lancscc.gov.uk](mailto:unison@unison.lancscc.gov.uk)**

