

National Employers for local government services

Mike Short, Sharon Wilde, Clare Keogh
Trade Union Side Secretaries
NJC for Local Government Services
c/o UNISON Centre
130 Euston Road
London NW1 2AY

16 May 2024

Dear Mike, Sharon and Clare

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY 2024

Thank you for your pay claim, which was received on 29 February. Following its receipt, the National Employers consulted councils and then met initially on 16 April to discuss the key themes to come out of those sessions. They then adjourned for private political discussions before reconvening today.

The employers considered very carefully your request for 'meaningful negotiations'. Conscious of the usual implementation date of 1 April and concerns raised by employers and employees alike when previous Agreements have been delayed, the National Employers agreed that making a full and final offer would provide certainty from the outset to yourselves, your members, the wider workforce and local employers that their offer, set out below, is the maximum they are able to make.

The National Employers wish to make the following full and final, one-year (1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025) offer:

- **With effect from 1 April 2024, an increase of £1,290 (pro rata for part-time employees) to be paid as a consolidated, permanent addition on all NJC pay points 2 to 43 inclusive.** *The equivalent percentage increases to each pay point are shown at Annex A*
- **With effect from 1 April 2024, an increase of 2.50 per cent on all pay points above the maximum of the pay spine but graded below deputy chief officer** *(in accordance with Green Book Part 2 Para 5.4¹)*
- **With effect from 1 April 2024 an increase of 2.50 per cent on all allowances** *(as listed in the 2023 NJC pay agreement circular dated 1 November 2023)*

The most important factor in formulating this response has been affordability. We have a duty to balance your claim against the interests of local residents, in terms of the level and quality of services provided by local authorities. The proposed increase will be difficult to fund in a number of local authorities and anything beyond that would take many more authorities well beyond their level of affordability.

We recognise that our offer falls short of your aspirations, but the effects of an unaffordable increase are inescapable: councils would have to make cuts in services, with a subsequent impact on jobs and council tax payers.

¹ The Green Book Part 2 Para 5.4 provides that posts paid above the maximum of the pay spine but graded below deputy chief officer are within scope of the NJC. The pay levels for such posts are determined locally, but once fixed are increased in line with agreements reached by the NJC.

In response to other elements of your claim:

Your claim seeks, ***Reviews of the gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps in local government.*** You may be aware that the LGA monitors councils statutory reporting of the Gender Pay Gap, providing annual updates through the [LG Inform platform](#). This year, the LGA will be undertaking a programme of work which will include examining how councils report any pay gaps across their workforce, particularly in relation to employees with certain protected characteristics.

The National Employers propose the NJC Joint Secretaries discuss options for working together to capture pay gap information that will be of most benefit to the sector.

In response to the remaining elements of your claim:

- ***A two-hour reduction in the working week, with no detriment***
The Employers reject this element of the claim in relation to a proposed 35-hour week (34 in London). Such a reduction would be out of line with norms in local government and would result in an increase in costs that would adversely affect local authority services.
- ***An additional day of annual leave for personal or well-being purposes (with term-time only staff also receiving a full day rather than a pro rata amount, that they can use at any time, including term time)***
The Employers reject this element of the claim. All NJC employees currently receive a minimum of 23 days' leave (with a further three days after five years' service), plus two extra statutory days, plus public holidays. Many councils have a more generous basic leave entitlement.
- ***A phased approach to reaching a minimum pay rate of £15 an hour in a maximum of two years, sooner if possible***
In order to achieve this objective would require increasing just the bottom pay point by 29.42 per cent over the period 2024-26. That would be prohibitively expensive for councils at any time, not least during the current difficult financial circumstances.

The National Employers of course respect that each of your unions will have its own processes and procedures to follow, but we urge you all to please try and synchronise the timing and duration of your membership consultations in order that a final agreement is reached so that employees, who continue to provide such critical support to their communities, can receive this award as soon as is practicable.

A prompt settlement this year would give us the necessary opportunity to begin negotiating a redesigned national pay spine, as was agreed by us all in the 2023 NJC agreement. The National Employers today recommitted to this objective, which will require intense and meaningful negotiations with the NJC unions.

Yours sincerely,

Naomi Cooke

Naomi Cooke
Employers' Secretary

ANNEX A

SCP	Employer offer	Equivalent percentage
1	<i>Deleted wef 1 April 2023</i>	
2	£1,290	5.77%
3	£1,290	5.67%
4	£1,290	5.58%
5	£1,290	5.49%
6	£1,290	5.40%
7	£1,290	5.31%
8	£1,290	5.22%
9	£1,290	5.14%
10	£1,290	5.05%
11	£1,290	4.97%
12	£1,290	4.88%
13	£1,290	4.80%
14	£1,290	4.72%
15	£1,290	4.64%
16	£1,290	4.56%
17	£1,290	4.48%
18	£1,290	4.41%
19	£1,290	4.33%
20	£1,290	4.26%
21	£1,290	4.18%
22	£1,290	4.11%
23	£1,290	4.02%
24	£1,290	3.91%
25	£1,290	3.80%
26	£1,290	3.70%
27	£1,290	3.61%
28	£1,290	3.52%
29	£1,290	3.46%
30	£1,290	3.37%
31	£1,290	3.29%
32	£1,290	3.21%
33	£1,290	3.11%
34	£1,290	3.04%
35	£1,290	2.97%
36	£1,290	2.90%
37	£1,290	2.84%
38	£1,290	2.78%
39	£1,290	2.72%
40	£1,290	2.66%
41	£1,290	2.61%
42	£1,290	2.55%
43	£1,290	2.50%