

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

17 August 2023

Dear Mike, Sharon and Clare

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY 2023

Thank you for your letter of 16 August in which you again seek an improved pay offer.

The employers' offer has been repeatedly and unanimously reaffirmed as full and final since it was made on 23 February. It was described intentionally as *full and final* in order to provide certainty from the outset to yourselves, your members, the wider workforce and local employers that this was the maximum offer the National Employers are able to make and to confirm that a different offer would not emerge at a later date.

A key objective in consulting councils on your claim and responding to it within four weeks of receiving it, was to enable agreement to be reached in a timely manner ensuring all local government employees received the award as close to the 1 April implementation date as possible. The National Employers are acutely aware of the cost-of-living pressures the local government workforce is experiencing, which is why they believe the pay award should not be subject to yet further delays.

We have noted UNISON's and Unite's strike ballot results and urge GMB to cancel its planned ballots. The NJC bargaining group covers a directly employed workforce of around 1.4m people in more than 300 councils, tens of thousands of schools and numerous other organisations that apply NJC pay rates. For the unions to potentially push ahead with industrial action, as suggested in your letter, and thereby continue to deny such a huge workforce from getting its pay increase, is deeply disappointing.

The National Employers remain firmly committed to national bargaining and share your wish to see a timely start to the 2024 pay round. However, that can only happen once agreement has been reached on their 2023 offer, which we remind you equates to an increase for the lowest paid of 9.42 per cent this year; meaning their pay will have increased by £4,033 (22.0 per cent) over the two years since April 2021.

The National Employers believe their offer, which we again reaffirm as full and final, is fair in the current circumstances and we urge you all to now accept it so that all NJC employees can finally receive the pay increase they have been waiting for since April.

Yours sincerely,

Naomi Cooke

Naomi Cooke, Employers' Secretary