

Heather Wakefield 020 7121 5329

Rt Hon George Osborne MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
1 Horseguards Road  
London  
SW1A 2HQ

21 January 2014

Dear Chancellor

#### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY 2014- 2015**

I wrote to you on 14 January about this year's pay award for local government workers, asking you to enable local authorities to meet our claim for an additional £1.20 pence an hour for all to ensure that the lowest paid receive the Living Wage. We also want to ensure that others above the Living Wage are compensated for at least some of the 18% loss of earnings which they have suffered since the Coalition took office in 2010.

Since I wrote to you, you have stated your support for an increase in the National Minimum Wage to £7 an hour, to enable it to catch up with inflation. While we believe that no-one should be paid less than the Living Wage, my union UNISON fully supports such an increase in the National Minimum Wage as a move towards an income which would allow our hard working members to live – not just exist.

I feel I must point out that over 120,000 local government workers currently earn less than £7 an hour, which would represent an 8.5% pay increase for the lowest paid. They are, of course, covered by the Minimum Wage legislation and would be entitled to any such increase this year. At the same time, the government has imposed a 1% limit on public sector pay, which would clearly not meet your aspiration for a Minimum Wage of £7 an hour for the lowest paid local government workers.

While I believe that our claim for £1.20 an hour for all local government workers is just and affordable – as explained in my last letter – I do hope that you will take steps to ensure that the 1% pay cap is lifted to ensure that my members in local government can enjoy any increase in the national Minimum Wage which exceeds it.

I hope too that local authorities are enabled through adequate funding to increase the basic earnings of the lowest paid to at least meet any increase in the National Minimum Wage – and preferably to meet our claim.

I would, of course, be happy to meet and discuss this with you.

Best wishes,

Heather Wakefield  
National Secretary  
Local Government, Police and Justice Section