

# NJC PAY

# 14

Campaigning for a fair deal for local government workers

9 May 2014

Issue No 28

## Keep Up Your Political Campaigning!

There is still a vital window of opportunity for branches, members and Regions to lobby councillors MPs and MEPs for an improved offer before the local elections. You need to let existing councillors and new candidates know that this is a critical issue for UNISON.

Attached to the bulletin are updated model letters for everyone to send their politicians and questions they should ask them. These are posted on our web page with links for you to email your politicians direct – see <http://www.unison.org.uk/at-work/local-government/key-issues/local-government-pay/take-action/>

Please try and get as many letters sent to councillors over the next week as possible. Get everyone to e-mail their councillors – not just local government members.

## Bulk despatch of campaign materials coming your way!

All branches will receive a basic supply of core campaign materials by 16 May in the following quantities:

Branch membership	Generic leaflet stock 3400	Poster Stock 3401	Schools leaflet stock 3409
7500k plus	4000	300	2000
5001 – 7500	2000	200	1000
3001 -5k	1000	150	500
1001 – 3k	800	100	400
500 – 1k	500	80	250
1-500	200	40	100

We will have plenty left in stock to fulfil further requests. The pdfs are in the online catalogue as follows:

<http://www.unison.org.uk/catalogue/22392>

<http://www.unison.org.uk/catalogue/22373>

<http://www.unison.org.uk/catalogue/22372>

## **UNISON Survey – tell us about the impact of falling pay and rising prices on you**

We want everyone working in councils and schools to tell us about the impact falling pay and rising prices have had on them. Please complete this short on line survey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/paycampaign> and circulate the link to your workmates – members and non-members. Use it for recruitment. It takes a few minutes to complete and responses are completely confidential.

Branches are asked to publicise our survey and offer members without internet access the opportunity to fill the survey in the branch office.

### **Go forth and multiply!**

**All local government members are asked to recruit at least one non-member in the next two weeks and double our membership in local government.**

Recruitment materials are available at <http://www.unison.org.uk/for-activists/help-and-advice/recruiting-members/resources/recruitment-materials/>

We know that many of you feel under pressure because of the threat of redundancies and further cuts. But keeping pay low will not save jobs and services. So please talk to your colleagues at work and your friends and families and let them know why UNISON is taking a stand. ***And don't forget to get non-members to join us....in UNISON...for a fair deal on local government pay***

### **NJC Pay Champions and workplace contacts – what you should do now**

- Keep talking to workmates about why they should vote Yes to strike action
- Distribute Vote Yes campaign materials and ensure posters are up in each workplace
- Print out and distribute copies of our model letters/questions to councillors and MPS for members to send
- Keep up your recruiting of new members using Worth it materials
- Encourage members and non members to complete our online survey
- Get members and non members to sign our petition calling on the employers to make an improved offer <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/local-government-workers-need-a-decent-pay-rise.html>

- Make sure members like us on Facebook [www.UnisonInLocalGovernment](http://www.UnisonInLocalGovernment) and follow us on [www.twitter@LocalGovPay](https://www.twitter@LocalGovPay)

## Model Text for Members Letter to Councillors on NJC Pay

Dear Councillor (give name)

I have lived in your local authority for (insert number of) years. I am writing to ask you to support UNISON's campaign for a fair pay rise for local government and school support workers. UNISON is seeking an increase of at least £1 an hour for all the people like me who are keeping council services and schools running in the face of ongoing job and pay cuts.

The final pay offer from the Local Government Association (LGA) would give the majority of staff a pay increase of only 1%. The pay of the lowest paid workers in local government is getting closer and closer to the National Minimum Wage, and hundreds of thousands of local government workers are paid below the Living Wage.

I am insulted by the LGA's attitude to the local government workforce, which is now at an all time low. Since 2010, I have had a three-year pay freeze and just a 1% increase last year. That means my pay has fallen by 18% in real terms. On top of that many of us have had unsocial hours pay, annual leave, sick pay and car allowances cut. With food, fuel and travel costs going through the roof, I am in real financial hardship. Local government cuts to pay mean that I can no longer

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Please do everything you can to get the council to put pressure on the LGA to make a decent pay offer and on government to fund it. I understand that our pay claim comes at a time of unprecedented cuts in local government funding by central government. But there are political choices that can be made. Since 2010 the local government pay bill has reduced by 25% and council reserves have increased to £19 billion. We are told that large reserves are needed for investment – some of this must be for investment in staff.

If I had £1 an hour extra, I would spend it locally. This would give our local businesses a boost and help get the economy going too. Research undertaken for my union shows that if local government workers were paid an extra £1 an hour, the extra income from higher tax and national insurance 'take' and reduction in benefit costs would mean a saving of £760 million for government. If the Chancellor chose to do so, these savings could be re-cycled to councils to help pay for our claim.

I'm sure you will agree that your local council and school support workers are doing a great job. But I feel that enough is enough, and that's why I will be voting to take strike action. We have shown our commitment to keeping our local services going against the odds. I am now asking you to show your commitment to us.

As you know, there are local and European elections this month. Councillors and MEPs will find it hard to get the support of local council and school support workers unless they do something now about the real hardship we face.

**Please can you:**

- **Sign our petition, calling on the employers to make an improved offer – and get your constituents to sign it too!**  
<http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/local-government-workers-need-a-decent-pay-rise.html>
- **Put pay on the agenda for your Group meeting, to have a proper debate with your fellow councillors, and invite your local UNISON branch to come along to speak**

I am worth more than 1% because .....

Please help make our employers and government see that local government workers deserve better.

## **Model Text for Members Letter to MPs and prospective MEPs on NJC Pay**

Dear MP / MEP / Prospective MEP (delete this and insert name)

I have lived in your constituency for (insert number of) years. I am writing to ask you to support UNISON's campaign for a fair pay rise for local government and school support workers. UNISON is seeking an increase of at least £1 an hour for all the people like me who are keeping council services and schools running in the face of ongoing job and pay cuts.

The final pay offer from the Local Government Association (LGA) would give the majority of staff a pay increase of only 1%. The pay of the lowest paid workers in local government is getting closer and closer to the National Minimum Wage, and hundreds of thousands of local government workers are paid below the Living Wage.

I am insulted by the LGA's attitude to the local government workforce, which is now at an all time low. Since 2010, I have had a three-year pay freeze and just a 1% increase last year. That means my pay has fallen by 18% in real terms. On top of that many of us have had unsocial hours pay, annual leave, sick pay and car allowances cut. With food, fuel and travel costs going through the roof, I am in real financial hardship. Local government cuts to pay mean that I can no longer  
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Please lobby our council to get them to put pressure on the LGA to make a decent pay offer and on government to fund it. I do understand that our pay claim comes at a time of unprecedented cuts in local government funding by central government. But there are political choices that can be made. Since 2010 the local government pay bill has reduced by 25% and council reserves have increased to £19 billion. We are told that large reserves are needed for investment – some of this must be for investment in staff.

If I had £1 an hour extra, I would spend it locally. This would give our local businesses a boost and help get the economy going too. Research undertaken for my union shows that if local government workers were paid an extra £1 an hour, the extra income from higher tax and national insurance 'take' and reduction in benefit costs would mean a saving of £760 million for government. If the Chancellor chose to do so, these savings could be re-cycled to councils to help pay for our claim.

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As you know, there are local and European elections this month. Councillors and MEPs will find it hard to get the support of local council and school support workers unless they do something now about the real hardship we face.

Please can you:

- Sign our petition, calling on the employers to make an improved offer – and get your constituents to sign it too!  
<http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/local-government-workers-need-a-decent-pay-rise.html>
- Add your signature to Early Day Motion 1159, in support of local government and school support workers' pay  
<http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2013-14/1159>
- Ask councillors in your local authority to put pay onto the agenda for their Group meeting, and invite the local UNISON branch to come along to speak

I am worth more than 1% because .....

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## Questions for councillors, MPs and MEP candidates

- **Are you aware of the true state of low pay in local government?**  
Hundreds of thousands of workers, mostly women, are paid below the Living Wage, and pay at the bottom end is getting closer and closer to the National Minimum Wage.
- **Did you know that we're balloting for strike action on pay?** Local government and school support workers' pay has fallen by 18% in real terms since 2010 while they have worked hard to keep services running in the face of ongoing jobs and service cuts. But now they feel that enough is enough.
- **Will you sign our petition**, calling on the employers to make an improved offer <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/local-government-workers-need-a-decent-pay-rise.html>
- **Can you put pay on the agenda for your Group meeting**, to have a proper debate with your fellow councillors, and invite your local UNISON branch to come along to speak?
- **MPs: have you signed Early Day Motion 1159**, in support of local government and school support workers' pay? If not, please do so <http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2013-14/1159>