



FAO Scottish Joint Council Trade Union Side Joint Secretaries

David O'Connor, Joint Secretary – Unison  
Graham McNab, Joint Secretary – Unite  
Keir Greenaway, Joint Secretary – GMB

23 May 2024

By email

Dear David, Graham, and Keir,

### **Scottish Joint Council Pay Negotiations 2024/25 – Employers' Side Pay Offer**

I write following a number of constructive SJC Steering Group negotiating meetings where we have discussed both pay and possible terms and conditions changes. This was based on the mandate provided to Cllr Katie Hagmann, COSLA Spokesperson for Resources, by Council Leaders on 26 April 2024.

Following the most recent discussions at the SJC Steering Group meeting on 22 May, we are now in a position to make a formal pay offer to you. As set out verbally to you at that meeting, the following offer is for a settlement which runs for an 18-month period of **1 April 2024 to 30 September 2025:**

- A 2.2% uplift on all Spinal Column Points (SCP) from 1 April 2024.
- A further 2% uplift on all SCP from 1 October 2024.
- A change in settlement date to 1 October, aligned with the recommendations in the Pay Negotiations Review, which was also considered at COSLA Leaders meeting on 26 April 2024. This would establish a new SJC pay year of 1 October – 30 September.
- An agreement to jointly develop a negotiation protocol in good time for implementation of the new pay year.

This offer utilises the full negotiating remit provided by Council Leaders.

The SJC Steering Group has had in-depth discussions on various other terms and conditions matters. As you are aware, the employers' side has taken account of your

views and feedback from these discussions. We have noted from the discussions that your primary focus has been on pay. As a result, we have fully used the negotiating mandate to address pay with a single T&C change around the settlement date rather than hold back resources (and an offer) to consider other issues.

I know during our discussions we have had the opportunity to consider the significant financial constraints and workforce pressures that councils are currently facing. I would like to thank you and your colleagues for the serious and thoughtful input to our discussions taking account of these pressures.

We believe this offer is fair and meaningful and reflects the high value Leaders place on the Local Government workforce.

I should be obliged if, in receiving this pay offer from COSLA Employers, the Trade Unions seek the views of your members and provide COSLA with your response, acknowledging that Leaders meet again on 31<sup>st</sup> May.

We have responded to other parts of your claims in the following page.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stuart Bain". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Stuart Bain  
Employers' Side Joint Secretary

## **Other parts of the SJC Trade Union Claims for 2024/25**

### Parity with other bargaining groups

COSLA Leaders remain committed to providing equitable offers to all bargaining groups.

### Early commencement of negotiations and implementation by 1 April

Leaders share the desire for timely negotiations and resolution of pay claims. We recognise that there have been challenges in achieving this in previous years. The pay offer for 2024/25 includes a change in settlement date, moving it to 1 October. We hope that changing the settlement date and jointly agreeing a negotiating protocol will provide significantly better opportunities for achieving an agreement by the annual settlement date.

### Minimum rate of £15 per hour

COSLA Leaders recognise and support the aspiration to move progressively towards a £15 minimum rate of pay. A working group focused on this has been established, made up of SJC Trade Union representatives, COSLA Officers and their Professional Advisors. This group will take forward detailed consideration and work on this issue.

### Reduction in the working week

A working group was established in early 2022 to consider a reduction in the working week. This work was stalled due to the focus on last year's pay negotiations. The group has now been re-established and a draft report which sets out the work of the group to date has been produced. Further discussions will take place at future meetings and a report will be provided to COSLA Leaders for their consideration at an appropriate time.

### Holiday entitlement protocols

Holiday entitlement and protocols for part-time staff and local arrangements within Councils are not covered by the SJC Handbook (Red book).

### Distant Islands Allowance

The Distant Islands Allowance (DIA) has increased incrementally over many years. To illustrate the impact of the DIA over time, in 2014 the DIA represented an increase of 8.88% to annual pay at SCP 40, whilst in 2023 the DIA represented an increase of 9.21% at SCP 40. We believe that the current approach to DIA is acceptable based on this increased percentage impact on pay.