

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS LOCAL

GOVERNMENT PAY BALLOT 2022

What did we ask for?

You can read our full claim [here](#). The claim was for:

- A settlement that runs for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.
- A £3,000 flat rate increase to all spinal column points (based on a 35 hour working week).
- An underpinning minimum rate of pay of £12 per hour.
- The payment of SSSC fees for all by 1st April 2022 and completion of the review, established as part of our 2021 settlement, of all other professional fees incurred by members in the course of their employment by March 2023.
- Early completion of the review, established as part of our 2021 settlement, on how we achieve a no detriment reduction in the working week.
- Agreement to change the national calculator for the normal working week to 35 hours.
- An agreement that in future all allowances are automatically uprated in line with October inflation rates.
- Agreement of home/hybrid working guidance that provides appropriate recompense for expenses incurred as a result of home/hybrid working.
- A review of the job evaluation scores for roles that have changed during the period of the pandemic and/or have new additional qualification requirements.
- No less than parity with other local government bargaining groups.
- Early commencement of negotiations with a clear expectation of settlement implementation by 1 April review date.

What is the employer offering?

The employer has, to date, only tabled one offer – that was on the 2nd March 2022. You can read the employer's offer [here](#). The offer is for:

- An increase in the Scottish Local Government Living Wage hourly rate to £9.98.
- A 2% increase for all spinal column points.

Which groups are being balloted for strike action?

The membership groups that we have formally notified employers we will be balloting are all members employed working in schools, who provide services to the running and operation of the school, and all members working in early years and in waste and recycling services.

Why are only certain groups being balloted for action?

It is important to stress that this campaign is for all local government workers. The decision to only ballot certain groups of workers for strike action is tactical - to ensure we maximise the impact of our action on vital service areas likely to force the employers hand.

What is the deadline for returning my ballot paper?

We must receive your completed ballot paper by 10am on the 26th July 2022 so you need to get it in a post box a couple of days before this to make sure you meet the deadline.

What should I do if I misplace my ballot paper?

Call the ballot helpline on 0800 0 857 857. This Helpline will be open from 8am on 15th June 2022 to 12 noon on the 20th July 2022.

Why can't I vote online?

Legislation governing industrial action stipulates that a formal industrial action ballot must be conducted by post.

Why should I vote for strike action?

- The offer is not good enough – you are worth so much more.
- Having consistently worked above and beyond to keep our key services going over the past 2 years of the pandemic, and with the cost of living spiralling, COSLA's offer of a 2% increase to these workers is nothing short of an insult.
- This offer is less than the Scottish Public Sector Pay policy, falls far short of our pay claim, is significantly below current levels of inflation and is in sharp contrast to the 5.2% increase that Councillors themselves have just received from 1st April 2022.
- The cost of living is spiralling – inflation is at a 40 year high (RPI is now at 11.1%), energy prices have gone up circa 54%, food prices have increased circa 5%, transport prices have gone up circa 9% and in many areas council tax has risen by a higher percentage than this proposed offer. This offer will not cover these increases and will further erode the value of our members pay.
- The failure to provide a meaningful increase to the Scottish Local Government Living Wage means that those on the lowest pay would still not reach a £10 per hour rate of pay never mind the £12 per hour called for in our claim.
- This offer is weighted towards those on the highest pay and will further exacerbate the issue of endemic low pay which plagues this sector.
- The offer fails to address many of the other issues outlined in our claim such as the need to alleviate the burden of paying professional fees for those on the lowest wages and achieving a no-detriment reduction in the working week to address issues of work-life balance.
- UNISON would not ask you to take strike action unless it was absolutely necessary. We have exhausted all other options in terms of trying to get movement from your employers.

Will I get any financial support if I vote to take strike action?

Yes, all members taking strike action will be financially supported by UNISON. Further details will follow.

I am employed on multiple contracts with my local authority – am I being balloted to take strike action in all my roles?

You are only being balloted on your role as an employee working in a schools, for the purpose of providing services to the running and operation of the school, or your work in early years or in waste and recycling services.

I'm not being balloted for strike action – what can I do to show my support for the campaign?

There are a number of things you can do to show support for the campaign and it is important that you do so colleagues included in the ballot know that you stand with them.

You can:

Help us get the word out! UNISON is leading the fight for better pay for all local government workers – help share our campaign messages.

Help us speak to colleagues who are being balloted to stress the importance of them returning their ballot paper – sign up to call colleagues by contacting your local branch.

Talk to your colleagues in the workplace about the importance of voting yes to take strike action.

Share our campaign materials on your social media feeds. You can access these here.

Recruit your colleagues to UNISON – the more members we have the louder our voice at the negotiating table. They can join online at joinunison.org or call free on 0800 171 2194.

Vote
YES 
for strike action