



To: Simon Cameron, COSLA SJC Joint Secretary

c.c: Cllr Katy Hagmann, COSLA Resources Spokesperson
All Scottish Council Leaders
Humza Yousef MSP MSP, First Minister
Shona Robinson, Deputy First Minister & Finance Secretary
Keir Greenaway, GMB
Graham McNab, Unite

Date: 4th September 2023

- sent via e-mail –

Dear Simon,

SJC Pay 2023

We write further to the closure of our second wave of industrial action ballots on Friday 25th August. You will be aware that UNISON members in Stirling and Perth & Kinross have already taken industrial action over the pay offer for 2023.

As you will likely have established from discussion with your local authority representatives the results of our most recent formal industrial action ballot are nothing short of remarkable.

- **UNISON have secured mandates to take strike action in 24 local authority areas**, of every size and geographical scale, across Scotland - Aberdeenshire Council, Highland Council, Orkney Islands Council, Shetland Islands Council, The City of Edinburgh Council, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Fife Council, South Lanarkshire Council, Aberdeen City Council, Glasgow City Council, Clackmannanshire Council, Moray Council, South Ayrshire Council, Stirling Council, West Dunbartonshire Council, North Ayrshire Council, East Dunbartonshire Council, Dundee City Council, Inverclyde Council, Angus Council, East Renfrewshire Council, Perth & Kinross Council, Dumfries & Galloway Council, Renfrewshire Council.
- **UNISON's strike mandate covers over 21,000 members** covering the full range of school support staff duties including school cleaners, caterers, janitors and school support assistants.
- **UNISON's mandate covers members working in over 1,868 schools across Scotland.**

This strike mandate is the strongest show of strength by our members in decades – their resolve to fight for the decent pay rise they, and all their colleagues across local government, so richly deserve is clear for all to see.

Members were due their pay uplift in April of this year – it is therefore already 5 months overdue, despite our claim being submitted on 26th January 2023. This is unacceptable.

We understand that COSLA leaders are due to meet tomorrow, Tuesday 5th September. Leaders need to put forward a significantly improved offer soon to avert any further industrial action. We are in discussion with colleagues in our sister unions and our own locally elected lay representatives on strike dates and these will be announced in due course.

As noted in our previous correspondence our concerns with the initial offer remain that:

- It falls short of the Joint Trade Union's claim

- It falls short of the current rate of inflation. It would therefore amount to a real-terms pay cut for our members during the current cost of living crises and as such will plunge more of them into debt.
- For those on the lowest pay, falls short of the offer made to local government workers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- It has a cost envelope which falls short of that which has applied to other areas of the public sector.
- It fails to address other items contained within our claim including, significantly, any real proposal or timescale to move to a minimum rate of pay of £15 per hour for all local government workers.

If you need to make further representations to the Scottish Government for additional financial support to improve the offer we would urge you to make these as a matter of urgency.

Regards,

Johanna Baxter
Head of Local Government
UNISON Scotland

Mark Ferguson
Chair, Local Government Committee
UNISON Scotland