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## Unions press for further pay talks

All three NJC trade unions have now completed their membership consultations on the LGA pay offer. UNISON and Unite now have a mandate to seek industrial action ballots. UNISON members voted by 64% to reject the offer and Unite members voted to reject by 87%. 90% of GMB members voted to accept.

Given the strength of our members' feelings about the current offer, UNISON and Unite are pressing the Local Government Association (LGA) to put a revised, one-year offer on the table. In particular, we are calling for more certainty and firmer timetables for the proposed joint reviews of term time working and restructuring of the Green Book NJC/GLPC pay spines. We want these reviews completed within a year.

The Employers' Side of the NJC is meeting on 1 April to consider our call for a revised offer. UNISON's NJC Committee and the NJC Trade Union Side Executive will meet to consider any revised offer from the LGA on 5 April.

We want a clear NJC agreement on term-time working to deliver fair, consistent and transparent pay and conditions such as Bank Holidays, annual leave, maternity pay and sick pay. Where employees – mostly school staff - are put onto term-time contracts, there are many variations and inconsistencies in the formulas used for calculating and reducing pay from full year to a term-time figure.

And there is pressure on the employers to reach agreement. Over a third of the pay points on the current pay spine will fall below the Chancellor's National Living Wage by 2020 and so will have to be deleted and a majority of councils are now paying the 'real' Living Wage. Employers want to start thinking now about how to manage this in terms of cost and impact on pay and grading structures. Pay differentials also need to be maintained to ensure equal pay for work of equal value and fairness. They are looking to the LGA to start joint work with the unions to revise the NJC and GLPC pay spines. We want clear commitments and timetables for this work.

### Introduction of the National Living Wage

On 1 April, the statutory National Living Wage will be introduced at a rate of £7.20 per hour. The current bottom three pay points on the Green Book pay spine will fall below that statutory minimum level. The current hourly rate of SCP6 is £7.06 (£13,614); SCP7 is £7.11 (£13,715) and SCP8 is £7.19 (£13,871).

The LGA has advised councils to increase the pay of employees currently paid on SCPs 6, 7 and 8 in accordance with the National Living Wage with effect from 1 April. This new single pay point for those three scale points equates to £13,891 per annum, calculated by multiplying the National Living Wage rate of £7.20 by the local government standard working week of 37 hours and then multiplying by 52.143 weeks.

**Tell your members what is happening and recruit!**

It is important to let your members know what UNISON and Unite are campaigning for on pay. This is also a good opportunity to get into the workplace and talk to non-members and recruit!