



08 April 2020

Naomi Cooke  
Employers' Side Secretary  
NJC for Local Government Services  
Local Government House  
Smith Square  
London, SW1P 3HZ

Dear Naomi,

We are writing to you at an unprecedented time. None of us could have foreseen the seismic shift that has happened in our lives and the lives of our members.

The most dangerous place to be during this epidemic is on the frontline. And local authority staff - overwhelmingly key workers - are pulling together despite great personal risk, to get the job done and protect the public. Our care workers are still visiting the vulnerable in their homes. Our waste and refuse workers are keeping our streets and communities clean. Our school staff are adapting to keep schools open. Our parks staff are dealing with abuse from some members of the public over occasional park closures. Across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, local government workers are pulling together like never before with good humour and enthusiasm in the face of an unprecedented global crisis, in the knowledge that some of their colleagues have now lost their lives.

The public and politicians are lining up to applaud the heroic efforts of our frontline, public sector workers. But this does not change the fact that the NJC workforce has seen the value of its pay fall by more than 20% over the last decade.

These unprecedented times are further compounding the concerns that we raised in our claim about working time, stress and mental health.

The Covid-19 crisis has thrown a spotlight on the importance of our councils and the value of council and school staff. Any pay offer needs to reflect the environment our members are now operating in and we urge you to substantially increase your initial offer.

This is a watershed moment for our members and for our entire society. It has been a humbling lesson to us all in the commitment and courage of our public sector workers.

We trust that employers will fully recognise the contributions our local authority workers are making, saving lives and keeping the country going. The unions stand ready and willing to work with the employers to make this case to government.

Could you please pass this letter to the NJC employers' side.

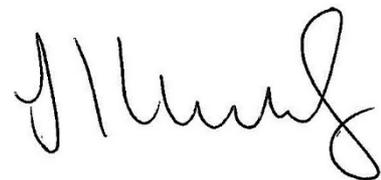
Yours sincerely



Rehana Azam GMB



Jon Richards UNISON



Jim Kennedy UNITE

Trade Unions Side Secretaries