

## **BRIEFING NOTE**

### **MOTION: Local Government Pay: A Fully Funded, Proper Pay Rise for Council and School Workers.**

This council notes:

Local government has endured central government funding cuts of more than 50% since 2010. Between 2010 and 2020, councils lost 60p out of every £1 they have received from central government. UNISON research found that councils in England had to fill a combined funding gap of £3 billion when setting budgets for 2022/23.

Over the last two years, councils have led the way in efforts against the Covid-19 pandemic, providing a huge range of services and support for our communities. Local government has shown more than ever how indispensable it is. But Covid has led to a massive increase in expenditure and loss of income, and as we emerge from the pandemic, local authorities and schools need far more support from Westminster.

Council and school workers kept our communities safe through the pandemic, often putting themselves at considerable risk as they work to protect public health, provide quality housing, ensure our children continue to be educated, and look after older and vulnerable people.

Since 2010, the local government workforce has endured years of pay restraint with the majority of pay points losing at least 25 per cent of their value since 2009/10. Staff are now facing the worst cost of living crisis in a generation, with inflation hitting 9% and many having to make impossible choices between food, heating and other essentials. This is a terrible situation for anyone to find themselves in.

At the same time, workers have experienced ever-increasing workloads and persistent job insecurity. Across the UK, 900,000 jobs have been lost in local government since June 2010 – a reduction of more than 30 per cent. Local government has arguably been hit by more severe job losses than any other part of the public sector.

There has been a disproportionate impact on women, with women making up more than three-quarters of the local government workforce.

Recent research shows that if the Government were to fully fund the unions' 2022 pay claim, around half of the money would be recouped thanks to increased tax revenue, reduced expenditure on benefits and tax credits, and increased consumer spending in the local economy.

This council believes:

Our workers are public service super-heroes. They keep our communities clean and safe, look after those in need and keep our towns and cities running.

Without the professionalism and dedication of our staff, the council services our residents rely on would not be deliverable.

Local government workers deserve a proper real-terms pay increase. The Government needs to take responsibility and fully fund this increase; it should not put the burden on local

authorities whose funding has been cut to the bone and who were not offered adequate support through the Covid-19 pandemic.

This council resolves to:

1. Support the pay claim submitted by UNISON, GMB and Unite on behalf of council and school workers, for an increase of £2,000 or the current RPI rate, whichever is the greater (along with the various conditions claims proposed)
2. Call on the Local Government Association to make urgent representations to central government to fund the NJC pay claim
3. Write to the Chancellor and Secretary of State to call for a pay increase for local government workers to be funded with new money from central government
4. Meet with local NJC union representatives to convey support for the pay claim and consider practical ways in which the council can support the campaign
5. Encourage all local government workers to join a union.

**PROPOSERS:**

Cllrs Wood, Black, Hartley and Redfern

**OFFICER BRIEFING NOTE**

The following figures are estimates based on current budget assumptions. RPI is currently 11.7%, the additional cost to the budget would potentially be as follows:

|                         |         |
|-------------------------|---------|
| General Fund            | £2.502M |
| Housing Revenue Account | £0.188M |

These figures are over and above the current budgetary provision of 2% inflation currently included and therefore represent the additional budgetary ask. It is anticipated that given the current RPI rate, this would be higher than an increase of £2000.

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Section 151 Officer drafted this briefing note and has no further comments.

**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

Re recommendation (5) to "Encourage all local government workers to join a union." Contact details are not held for all local government workers in the district however it would be possible to put out encouragement – by way of publicising this resolution - via social media and/or a press release, and the council's staff newsletter for those who are directly employed by the city council. TU contact details have also recently been published on the intranet.