As branches know, the NJC Trade Union Side has submitted the following claim for a pay increase for our members in 2016-17:

- Deletion of NJC and all local pay points which fall below the level of the UK Living Wage (and deletion of GLPC pay points below London Living Wage) and a flat rate increase of £1 per hour on all other pay points

- Retention and protection of Green Book Part 2 terms and conditions

- Fair treatment for school support staff through a joint review of term time working

The evidence supporting our claim has now been submitted to the Local Government Association and is attached or you can follow this link to the claim https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2015/08/NJC-Pay-Claim-2016-17_FINAL.pdf

Below are some of the key arguments made in support of the claim:-

**Our claim and local government funding**

- The LGA must halt the long-standing decline in local government and school pay. The NJC must be seen to be effective in restoring pay levels and protecting the terms and conditions of its workforce if it is to retain legitimacy and salience within councils, schools and the workforce

- It is also time for central government to realise that pay for the largest group of key public service workers is being reduced to the breadline

**Declining pay**

- Pay has plummeted in real terms by nearly 20% since 2009

- Those at the bottom of the pay structure – cleaners, catering assistants and school crossing patrol staff – their salary would be worth £1,409 more in real terms if it had risen in line with inflation since 2010
• 30% of the workforce earn below the UK Living Wage

• The disproportionate effect of the cuts on women mean that even in a sector where Single Status is meant to equalise and protect women’s pay, the gender pay gap between men and women has now risen by 3% since 2010

• There needs to be urgent action on pay and conditions to stop the rot in part-timers earnings. They are suffering drastic cuts to hours while 20% cover for redundant full time posts

• For the vast majority on NJC pay, last year’s pay award represented the sixth consecutive pay cut since 2010

• The pay of workers on scp 10 – such as library assistants, the lowest grade teaching assistants, midday supervisors and refuse loaders - would be worth £2,462 more in real terms if it had risen in line with inflation since 2010

• The pay of workers on middle incomes - such as nursery nurses, care workers, senior library assistants and environmental health technicians - would be worth £3,181 more in real terms if it had risen in line with inflation since 2010

• Social workers on scp 36 have lost £5,363 in real terms since 2010

Lowest pay in the public sector

• NJC pay is the lowest in the public sector and no one is paid a fair rate for the job they do. Terms and conditions such as annual leave, maternity pay and car allowances are also the worst

• Cleaners and catering assistants on NJC pay receive 5.5% less than their NHS counterparts. This rises to 7.5% less for NJC senior social workers. Nursery nurses on NJC pay are a staggering 21% worse off than their NHS counterparts

Living wage and in-work benefits

• Ad hoc agreements on Living Wage implementation make a mockery of collective bargaining. Fragmentation of pay bargaining will lead to pay equity problems and a free-for-all once there is renewed investment in local government. Those in jobs further up the structure will leave for better paid jobs elsewhere unless their earnings are also restored

• Due to years of neglect the NJC pay spine is being gradually compressed every year creating inequitable pay, damaging staff morale and future equal pay risks
• By applying a £1 per hour flat rate increase to the pay levels of all NJC workers earning above the UK National Living Wage, the LGA would be able to maintain equality proofed Single Status job evaluation outcomes and agreed pay and grading structures.

• There are major benefits to the economy that would arise from lifting the public sector pay cap and easing the squeeze on living standards.

• Many NJC workers are reliant on in-work benefits. The taxpayer is subsidising schools and councils to pay poverty wages. The savings made by paying local government workers the Living Wage and restoring earnings for higher paid employees could be channelled back by the Treasury into local government and schools settlements to pay for increases in pay.

• Cuts to tax credits announced in the July budget mean that NJC employees in low paid jobs will be among the hardest hit and will no longer be able to rely on the tax credit system and will face a widening income deficit.

Working life

• In the face of widespread cuts and job losses, local government and school workers are holding communities together at a time when their services are overwhelmed by public demand.

• Our call for decent pay for our members also reflects the massive increase in productivity which has arisen from almost 500,000 fewer workers delivering almost the same services as a result of Coalition and current government cuts.

• 76% of UNISON members report increased expectations from employers in the last 12 months.

• 73% report increased stress levels and two thirds increased workloads and pressure in the last year. 46% feel they have too much work to do and 54% feel stress at work is affecting their performance and 52% their personal life.

• 63% report morale has worsened over the last year.

Pay across the economy

• Regular wages (excluding bonuses) rose by 2.7% over the last year.

• Inflation forecasts suggest that from 2015 the cost of living employees face will grow by over 13% by 2019.

Terms and conditions

• 63% of UNISON members in councils and schools experienced a review or reorganisation in the last year driven by cost cutting exercises.
Almost half report changes to their pay and conditions since 2010, 85% of whom say their pay and conditions have worsened. In the majority of cases these changes had been imposed, rather than agreed.

A guarantee that Green Book Part 2 terms and conditions will be retained and protected is a key way for employers to demonstrate they value and support their dedicated and skilled workforces.

Fair Treatment for School Support Staff

- Treating teachers as full year and reducing the salaries of support staff by up to 20% through term-time working is divisive, bad for morale and unfair.

- The Trade Union Side are calling for a joint review of term time working and an NJC approach for fair, consistent and transparent contracts for school support staff.

Conclusion

- The Trade Union Side is tired and frustrated at having to negotiate pay increases which just keep our lowest paid members above the statutory national minimum wage and seeing our higher paid members face constant erosion of their standard of living.

- We want to see concerted joint action by central government and the LGA this year to provide additional funding for councils to pay the Living Wage to the lowest paid and compensate those above the Living Wage adequately.

Gear Up for the Pay Campaign!

The NJC Committee’s strategy paper on progressing 2014 local government conference motions on NJC pay, circulated to branches in January, forms the basis of our work on NJC pay. Recruitment and organising will be at the heart of the 2016 pay campaign in order to build our bargaining and industrial strength. Success will also require successful political ‘re-engagement’ at local and national level to continue to make our case for a fair deal for local government workers.

Without a significant increase in local government funding, the LGA will continue to argue it cannot fund our claim. Therefore funding for local government and schools has to be a significant part of our campaign.

The Local Government Association is starting its consultation exercise on the pay claim next month. They will be holding regional briefings between 4 September and 2 October and we anticipate their response soon after.

It is crucial we maximize political pressure on the LGA during this period. The first stage of our campaign is to build awareness of the NJC pay claim at local level with members and councillors.
The President and General Secretary have convened a Pay Summit, to be held in London on the 3rd September, to implement the objectives of Composite C carried at the 2015 NDC. The Local Government Pay campaign will be addressed as part of that Summit to develop a “Union wide” pay campaign involving all parts of our union i.e. Regions, Service Groups and Self Organised Groups. Further guidance will be issued to Branches as a priority following the Summit.

A range of materials is in production to be available for branches shortly. These include:

- Members leaflet
- Recruitment leaflet
- PowerPoint presentation
- Postcards for members to send to the Chairman of the LGA, Gary Porter and to the Chancellor, George Osborne.

We welcome any comments or ideas from branches about how to build the campaign. Please email us at NJCPay2016@unison.co.uk