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UNISON Centre  
130 Euston Road  
London NW1 2AY

Contact: Mike Short 020 7121 5324

Tel: 0800 0 857 858  
Fax: 020 7121 5101  
Text tel: 0800 0 967 968  
e-mail: localgovernment@unison.co.uk

[unison.org.uk/localgov](http://unison.org.uk/localgov)

To: Secretaries of all Local Government Branches  
Chief Officers and Senior Managers Committee  
Regional Heads of Local Government

8 February 2018

## Chief Officers JNC Pay

**This circular updates branches on the pay claim and negotiations for members covered by the Chief Officers JNC**

On 5 February 2018, UNISON and GMB, as the Officers' Side of the Chief Officers Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC), submitted a pay claim for 2018/19. The full pay claim is attached, but the headline claims were as follows:

1. A substantial increase on all salaries and relevant allowances  
*We note the offer made to members covered by the NJC, and we expect a pay settlement which provides parity across all of the local government bargaining groups, and which takes into account the erosion of real terms pay over the last nine years.*
2. An agreement that employers and trade unions will co-operate to jointly agree and circulate a national survey on the levels of stress, workload pressures, and unpaid overtime experienced by Chief Officers

*Following the results of the survey, we expect completion of the previously agreed joint work on workloads and stress; and future follow-up surveys to assess progress made on this issue.*

The pay claim was written following a consultation of branches and members.

On 6 February, the Employers' Side informed us that it would defer responding to our pay claim until the NJC pay round has been settled. UNISON's process of consulting members on the NJC pay offer ends in mid-March, and the NJC Committee meets on 14 March to decide next steps. So it will at least a few weeks – possibly longer – before a pay offer is made to Chief Officers. We will of course keep branches updated.

## Local government vs private sector senior pay – press coverage of UNISON research

UNISON recently carried out research into the levels of senior pay in local authorities, comparing the salaries of chief executives in local authorities with those of chief executives of FTSE companies of a similar size. Not surprisingly, our research revealed massive differences between the two.

We also recently surveyed chief officers to get their views on a range of pay and grading issues.

The Municipal Journal (MJ) has given extensive coverage to this work, and those who are subscribers can read their articles online at

<https://www.themj.co.uk/EXCLUSIVE-Public-and-private-sectors-poles-apart-in-senior-pay/210102#>

and

<https://www.themj.co.uk/Are-we-being-priced-out/210117>.

A full report on this work will be sent to branches in the near future, but here are a few key points:

- Average pay for the 10 sample council CEOs was £175,000 – or £203,000 with pension
- Average pay for the 10 FTSE CEOs was £559,000 – or £1.3m with pension
- For example, Birmingham council is similar in size to the Berkeley Group. Birmingham's CEO earns around £140,000 (£158,000 with pension); Berkeley's CEO gets £875,000 (£2.4m with pension!)
- The ratio of the highest pay rate to the lowest was 10.5:1 in councils; in the FTSE companies it was 111:1
- Only 39% of chief officers believe their council is effective at attracting high calibre people to top jobs. 72% said this is due to salaries.
- 40% of senior council officials earn between £40,000 and £60,000.

Clearly, pay is a huge problem in local government, but UNISON's position remains that the real problem is low pay and falling real pay; not high pay.

With best wishes



Heather Wakefield  
National Secretary  
Local Government, Police and Justice Section