

Scottish Local Government Pay Ballot Jan 19 Frequently Asked Questions

1. What am I voting on?

We are asking for your views on the pay offer that has been put forward by COSLA. UNISON's Scottish Local Government Committee is recommending that you ACCEPT the offer. It is really important that you let us know your views.

2. What are we being offered?

You can read the employer's offer letter [here](#). COSLA is now proposing an offer which covers a three year period, from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2021. If agreed the award for 2018 will be backdated to the 1 April 2018 application date. The key elements of the offer are:

- 2018/19 – an increase of 3.5 per cent for everyone earning up to £80,000 (for those earning above this a flat rate of £1600 will apply.)
- 2019/20 - an increase of 3 per cent.
- 2020/21 - an increase of 3 per cent.
- In each of these three years the Scottish Local Government Living Wage will rise by the percentage uplift referred to above.
- Full consolidation of the Living Wage, with Councils aiming to achieve this by March 2021. In exceptional circumstances, and where agreed with the Joint Trade Unions, an extension to this can be agreed, which will incorporate a firm commitment of a final implementation date for consolidation of 2022.
- Reaffirmation of COSLA's policy statement on pay parity across the Local Government workforce.
- A commitment to re-open negotiations with the Joint Trade Unions in the event of another Local Government bargaining group's total pay offer value being revised such that it becomes greater than the sum agreed between COSLA Employers and the SJC Trade Unions for the SJC workforce for the period of the agreement.

3. What does the cost of living increase look like in terms of the effect on my salary? An illustrative example of the impact on pay is below:

| Current Rate | Current Pay | 2018/19 Hourly | 2018/19 Full Time | 2019/20 Hourly | 2019/20 Full Time | 2020/21 Hourly | 2020/21 Full Time | 3 year gain – Full Time |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| £8.51 | £16,417 | £8.81 | £16,996 | £9.07 | £17,498 | £9.34 | £18,019 | £1,602 |
| £8.87 | £17,112 | £9.18 | £17,710 | £9.46 | £18,250 | £9.74 | £18,790 | £1,678 |
| £9.15 | £17,652 | £9.47 | £18,269 | £9.75 | £18,810 | £10.04 | £19,369 | £1,717 |
| £9.42 | £18,173 | £9.75 | £18,810 | £10.04 | £19,369 | £10.34 | £19,948 | £1,775 |
| £10.14 | £19,562 | £10.49 | £20,237 | £10.80 | £20,835 | £11.12 | £21,452 | £1,890 |
| £10.91 | £21,047 | £11.29 | £21,780 | £11.63 | £22,436 | £11.98 | £23,112 | £2,065 |
| £11.72 | £22,610 | £12.13 | £23,401 | £12.49 | £24,095 | £12.86 | £24,809 | £2,199 |
| £11.90 | £22,957 | £12.32 | £23,767 | £12.69 | £24,481 | £13.07 | £25,214 | £2,257 |
| £12.05 | £23,247 | £12.47 | £24,057 | £12.84 | £24,771 | £13.23 | £25,523 | £2,276 |
| £12.99 | £25,060 | £13.44 | £25,928 | £13.84 | £26,700 | £14.26 | £27,510 | £2,450 |
| £13.58 | £26,198 | £14.06 | £27,124 | £14.48 | £27,935 | £14.91 | £28,764 | £2,566 |
| £19.64 | £37,889 | £20.33 | £39,220 | £20.94 | £40,397 | £21.57 | £41,612 | £3,723 |
| £25.29 | £48,789 | £26.18 | £50,506 | £26.97 | £52,030 | £27.78 | £53,593 | £4,804 |
| £30.67 | £59,168 | £31.74 | £61,232 | £32.69 | £63,065 | £33.67 | £64,955 | £5,787 |
| £40.11 | £77,379 | £41.51 | £80,080 | £42.76 | £82,492 | £44.04 | £84,961 | £7,582 |

4. What did we ask for?

You can read a full copy of the pay claim which was submitted [here](#). We asked for:

- A one year settlement for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.
- A £1,500 flat rate increase to all spinal column points, or 6.5%, whichever would be greater (based on a 37 hour working week.)
- An equivalent percentage uprating of the Scottish Local Government Living Wage (SLGLW), with the SLGLW being used as the minimum pay level for pay and all allowances.
- An equivalent percentage or, the median paid where the base salary increase is paid as a flat rate, uprating of all allowances.
- A commitment to redress the imbalance in pay, caused by previous pay awards which have been below the rate of inflation, over a period of not more than 5 years.

5. Why is the Local Government Committee recommending acceptance of the offer?

In recommending this offer to you the Local Government Committee were mindful that:

- Significant progress has been made in negotiations with the employer – key elements of the revised offer, such as the commitment to full consolidation of the living wage, were not a feature of either of the two preceding offers.
- Whilst the offer does not meet all aspects of the claim it makes progress in all areas of it. If the offer is rejected we would have to proceed with a statutory ballot for industrial action.
- The progress made has been as a direct result of the campaign that we have built and all of the actions you have taken as part of that throughout the year.
- The cost of living increases proposed are in excess of the current and predicted inflation (RPI) rates for the duration of the offer.
- The principle of parity across the local government bargaining groups is reaffirmed. The additional funds provided by the Scottish Government to fund the review of the Teachers' main grade have been matched by the additional cost of the improved offer to you in 2018/19 and the additional costs that Councils will incur due to the commitment to consolidate the Scottish Living Wage. There is the commitment to re-open negotiations with the trade unions in the event of another local government bargaining group's total pay offer value being revised such that it becomes greater than the sum agreed between COSLA Leaders and the SJC Trade Unions. The current cost of living offer to teachers unions is 3% for each year 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.

6. Why has it taken so long to get to this point?

We know that the delay to securing this deal will have been a source of immense frustration for you. We submitted our pay claim on 12th January 2018. It took the employer two months to respond to that. When they did they presented us with a 'first and final' offer – we thought that could be improved.

Over the months that followed we negotiated with them for an improved offer, we lobbied the Scottish Government for additional funding for local government to improve the offer and we campaigned across the summer on the issue of ONE Team, emphasising that local government workers need to be treated as ONE Team and awarded a fair increase, alongside Teachers.

We wanted to give the employer every opportunity to put forward an acceptable offer. These efforts have seen the original offer revised upwards twice, to a point where your Local Government Committee can now recommend acceptance of the offer to you as the best that can be achieved through negotiation. If agreed the award for 2018 will be backdated to the 1 April 2018 application date.

7. What happens if we reject the offer?

If the offer is rejected we would have to proceed with a statutory ballot for industrial action.

Current Tory anti-trade union law means that a ballot for industrial action must secure a majority, of a 50% return of those entitled to vote, so that action is legal and protects members from dismissal and the trade union from other law suits.

8. Does industrial action mean strike action?

In order to secure an improved offer we would expect to have to take significant industrial action which could include strike action. The Local Government Committee would look at all available options.

9. What about people who aren't UNISON members – can they vote?

New members joining UNISON before the 13th January 2019 will get a vote on this offer. If they provide an e-mail address to the union when they join they will be sent an e-mail with a link to their ballot after this date but before the close of ballot on the 31st January 2019.

10. What can I do to support UNISON?

There are a number of things you can do to help strengthen the union's hand in negotiations:

- Make sure you use your vote!
- Encourage your fellow members to vote.
- Recruit your colleagues to the union and get them to vote.
- Share this info on your social networks so people understand why the offer should be accepted.
- Get involved in the work of your local UNISON branch.