



To: Derek Mackay MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution
From: SJC Trade Union Joint Secretaries
Date: 29th March 2018
Subject: COSLA Pay Offer

- Sent by e-mail -

Dear Derek,

I write further to COSLA's letter to you of 27th March 2018 and our meeting with them yesterday, 28th March 2018, regarding the COSLA pay offer for local government workers.

As you will be aware COSLA have made a uniform pay offer to the trade union sides on all four of the local authority bargaining groups. COSLA argue that no provision has been made in the local government settlement 2018/19 for a local government pay award and so their offer is the best and final offer that they can make.

You will be aware that COSLA have a long held principle of parity across the bargaining groups in terms of pay. This principle which was breached last year when you found additional monies for teachers pay which took their award above that of the other local authority bargaining groups.

We know that COSLA have made representations to you about maintaining the principle of parity across the bargaining groups. We support that principle and were disappointed when additional monies were not also found for our members. Parity must be maintained and if you are minded to influence a higher pay settlement for any local authority bargaining group this must be extended to all our bargaining groups, including our members.

Whilst we are disappointed that COSLA have chosen to frame their offer in the way that they and have, and we have made that clear to them, we also recognise the very challenging financial circumstances in which they have been placed.

It is clear to us that the Scottish Government have starved local authorities of the much needed funding they require even to stand still. It was the Scottish Government that you represent that has chosen to freeze council tax for ten years and starve councils of extra resources and it is the same Scottish Government that must now help councils deal with a legacy of low pay awards.

You cannot be happy to support a pay award that has not been negotiated in any way with the trade unions and would result in a part time cleaner receiving about £250 over the year compared to a chief executive receiving £1600.

You have repeatedly referred to the quality of work that public sector workers do but your examples never seem to include the road sweepers, the bin collectors, the care assistants or the school janitors. These workers have suffered a real terms decrease in their wages of some 15% over the past 10 years. It is time that their devotion to public service is recognised and you find the money needed to give them a decent pay rise and some element of restoration to address the many previous years of below inflation or zero increases.

As representatives of these workers we call on you to work with us and COSLA to ensure local authorities have the funds they need in order to make this happen.

We would welcome a meeting with you to discuss this at your earliest convenience.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards,

Johanna Baxter
SJC Joint Secretary
UNISON

Drew Duffy
SJC Joint Secretary
GMB

Willie McGonigle
SJC Joint Secretary
UNITE