

## **LBB Response to Joint Unions Claim LBB 23/24m**

### **SUMMARY CLAIM**

We are seeking:

A minimum of £2,000 or the current rate of RPI + 2%, whichever is greater, across the board increase on all salary points and allowances

***The latest figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) currently report RPI at 13.4% and CPI at 10.5% however, the pay offer has to be seen in the wider context of the pressures on Public Sector finances.***

***The unions' RPI + 2% pay claim (15.4%) would cost the Council £13.2m.***

***Nationally, whilst the previous years pay award was finally settled in November 2022, there are currently no proposals for the 23/24 pay award.***

An additional increase on all salary points of 3.75% prior to the above, to reflect the discrepancy between the LBB award for 2022-23 of 2.25%, when the GLPC Settlement of the 2022/23 claim by the joint unions saw an average pay rise of 6%

***Members are proposing an additional 2% in recognition of the unexpected spiralling inflation post 2022/3 pay award agreed by full Council***

***The unions' 3.75% pay claim would cost the Council £3.2m***

***This would be a total cost of £16.4m for the first two points.***

An additional increase on all allowances of 4.04% in accordance with the GLPC Settlement of the 2022/23 claim by the joint unions

***In light of the proposed pay award, and also the ongoing review of our allowances e.g. standby allowances for Noise service, we will look at uplifting our allowances to ensure we remain competitive and don't compromise the Councils service delivery interests. Members are currently being consulted and further discussions will take place with the Chairman of GP&L and the Portfolio Holder for Resources.***

Further to the above, backpay to all staff equivalent to any updated pay scales for the period 1 April 2022-31 March 2023

***Members are not proposing to provide backpay for the additional 2% related to 2022/23.***

***There is no requirement for Members to provide any additional increase for 22/23 having already agreed the pay award in good faith. However, Members***

***had proposed this additional amount in response to the unexpected spiralling inflation post 2022/3 pay award agreed by full Council.***

Consideration of a flat rate increase to hourly rates of pay in order to bring the minimum rate up to £15 per hour within two years

***The proposed increase would mean the minimum hourly rate at Bromley would be £11.93 per hour. The National Living Wage from April 2023 will be £10.42 per hour.***

***One of the key principles of adopting a local pay framework allows democratically elected Members/Councillors to determine staff pay and terms and conditions based on a number of factors including affordability and local benchmarks. In 2020/21, the Council removed the equivalent of lower spinal points up to and including spinal point 8.***

An increase in the annual leave entitlement by 1 day, in accordance with the GLPC Settlement of the 2022/23 claim by the joint unions

***There are no plans to increase the minimum entitlements for annual leave. The minimum leave in the Council is 24 plus the 8 statutory bank holiday, rising to 30 for long standing employees with 5 years or more service. This compares favourably with the leave provisions both in the private and public sector.***

***In addition, employees are given a discretionary additional concessionary day during the Christmas period.***

***The Council is committed to the well-being of our employees and regularly promotes wellbeing initiatives such as the Telephone Lottery, Well-being webinars, Ask HR sessions as well as the introduction of our Volunteering Policy. Support is also available to all staff through the Employee Assistance Programme as well as our Mental Health First Aiders. Promotions from Workforce Development are sent to staff on a regular basis.***

An additional day of annual leave for personal or well-being purposes

***Please see previous points above. In addition, the Council already have a special leave scheme in place to support employees.***

A reduction in the working week by two hours

***There are no plans to look at a reduction of the standard working week***

***However, we are committed to giving serious consideration to requests for flexible working arrangements. This includes 'compressed weeks' where staff work their usual 5-day week hours over the course of 4 days. We already have a number of colleagues working under these arrangements.***

A further review of the pay and grades structures following previous realignment and removal of the lowest bandings to achieve headroom above the Living Wage (National Minimum Wage) and the Foundation Living Wage (London Living Wage)

A review of the pay spine, including looking at the top end, and discussions about the link between how remuneration can be used to improve retention

- An additional increase in rates for staff at the bottom of the pay scale to bring their pay up to the level of the Foundation Living Wage (London Living Wage) which is currently set at £11.95 per hour for 2022-23 (£11.05 for 2021-22)

***The proposed increase would mean the minimum hourly rate at Bromley would be £11.93 per hour. The National Living Wage from April 2023 will be £10.42 per hour.***

- A review of payments and consideration of improvements to conditions in relation to additional components such as unsocial hours, gender pay, terms for working parents, and adjustments to hours

***The Council recognises the need to ensure an adequate work life balance for its staff and empowers its managers and staff to ensure that this happens.***

***Bromley has a range of flexible working and benefits for working parents including the Childcare deposit loan scheme, parental leave and special leave along with flexible working practices. Bromley's pay arrangement is equality compliant.***

- A review of job evaluation outcomes for school staff whose day-to-day work includes working on Special Educational Needs (SEN)

***The Council uses the Greater London Provincial Council (GLPC) Job Evaluation Scheme for evaluating all BR roles across the Council. The scheme was jointly agreed by the employers and unions in London local government with all staff who undertake job evaluation at Bromley being trained in the scheme.***

- A homeworking allowance for staff for whom it is a requirement to work from home

***Since the beginning of the Covid-19 Pandemic, various support has been made available including laptops and IT goody bags to support agile working, desks and chairs made available where required, mental health support and wellbeing initiatives and online training and support.***

***The Council's commitment to hybrid and agile working is very clear as stated in the Transforming Bromley Workplace Modernisation Programme. Therefore, as we eased back to the workplace following the lifting of the coronavirus restrictions, staff could continue to work smartly in a mixed arrangement including a combination of home and***

**office working or wholly from the office, subject to the desk to staff ratio (approximately 50% desk occupancy).**

- Special London Allowance for Residential Staff (should this apply) in accordance with the GLPC agreement (for reference, the agreed rate from 1 April 2022 was £1,271, the 2023 rate is awaited)

**Not applicable**

- Planned overtime rates in line with the GLPC recommendations for 2023-24 (see paragraph 2.4 of the Gold Book for guidance on the application of these rates)

**In light of the proposed pay award, and also the ongoing review of our allowances e.g. standby allowances for Noise service, we will look at uplifting our allowances to ensure we remain competitive and don't compromise the Councils service delivery interests. Members are currently being consulted and further discussions will take place with the Chairman of GP&L and the Portfolio Holder for Resources.**

- An agreement with the joint unions on behalf of staff in relation to the management of workloads across the Council

**The Council recognises the need to ensure an adequate work life balance for its staff and empowers its managers and staff to ensure that this happens. Monitoring by Senior Management helps to reinforce this best practice. The introduction of a formal workload agreement between the Council and the Trade Unions is not therefore required**

- Unions are asking the Council, as a non-NJC employer, to look again at their arrangements in the light of new national pay structures as they are forthcoming

The advantages of the NJC pay spine are:

- The NJC pay spine is transparent
- Using the NJC pay spines aids comparability with other NJC employers
- It becomes easier to apply future NJC pay awards
- Using the NJC pay spine futureproofs the employer against National Living Wage
- Increases and so provides stability
- The NJC pay spine provides a sound basis for future pay and grading exercises

**Bromley Council previously adopted localised terms and conditions giving democratically elected Members/Councillors the ability to determine staff pay and terms and conditions based on a number of factors including affordability and local benchmarks.**

***The Recruitment & Retention Board, chaired by the Director of HR, Customer Services & Public Affairs continues to monitor and benchmark a number of hard to fill positions across the Council. This includes undertaking regular benchmarking activities with London Councils and other neighbouring authorities in regard to pay and benefits.***