

Naomi Cooke  
Employers' Secretary  
Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives of Local Authorities  
Local Government Association  
18 Smith Square  
London SW1P 3HZ

28 January 2022

Dear Naomi,

**JOINT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY CHIEF EXECUTIVES  
PAY CLAIM FOR APRIL 2021 ONWARDS**

Thank you for your letter of 21 October.

The Association of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers has considered this carefully, and taken account of the ongoing position in respect of other groups of local authority staff.

ALACE is exceptionally disappointed that the Employers' "full and final offer" continues to be 1.5% for chief executives covered by the JNC although their equivalent offer for the generality of local government staff is 1.75%. We welcome the comments in your letter, that the Employers "were fulsome in their praise for the service of Chief Executives to the sector, especially so since the outbreak of the pandemic" and that "Members acknowledged the key role undertaken by Chief Executives in providing leadership and support at such a critical time in the sector's history". We heard similar plaudits in the meeting of the JNC on 13 September, and were grateful for the opportunity to put our views directly to senior representatives of the Employers.

However their comments about the contribution of chief executives and that the offer is not "a negative reflection on their collective efforts" ring hollow. In effect, the Employers are valuing the contribution of the most senior staff in local government less highly than that of other staff. We note that the same can be said of JNC chief officers, many of whom are also members of ALACE. The offer of 1.5% erodes differentials between chief executives and most other staff, without justification.

We welcome the Employers' acknowledgement that affordability was not "a major consideration in deciding what offer to make to Chief Executives". We concur. 0.25% of the chief executive's pay in most councils is a few hundred pounds. However we feel that the reference to the "wider context of pay in the public sector" and that the offer of 1.5% is "higher than in many other comparable areas" completely misses the point. ALACE is not seeking comparable treatment for chief executives with other parts of the public sector but with the colleagues in their councils with whom they work on a daily basis.

Having recorded our deep disappointment about the less advantageous treatment being proposed for chief executives, ALACE wishes to make a positive proposal that would allow both sides to move forward.

**ALACE is reluctantly prepared to accept the 1.5% offer for chief executives for April 2021 but only on the basis that the Employers agree to implement a direct and immutable link for increases for April 2022 onwards, to ensure that chief executives would receive the same increase as the generality of NJC staff.** We suggest that the link should be with the increase for spinal column points 25 to 43 of the NJC, recognising that increases for lower pay points may continue to run higher because of the impact of the national living wage. We believe that this would be consistent with what we understand to be the position in the Local Government Association, whose senior staff including the chief executive receive increases in line with the NJC.

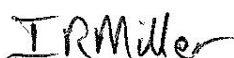
We should stress that a linkage of pay increases in this way is not intended to suggest that there is no longer a need for the JNC. Pay is only one aspect of the terms and conditions of chief executives. Their unique role as heads of paid service and the statutory provisions that protect them (and are reflected in the special arrangements set out in the handbook) justify the continuing need for a separate negotiating body for local government's most senior officers.

We believe that the proposal we have set out would be beneficial to both sides:

- It would ensure that chief executives could receive the increase for April 2021 and backdated pay more swiftly than might otherwise be the case;
- It would allow the Employers' side to demonstrate that at least one negotiating group in local government had reached agreement;
- It would be more efficient for both sides in respect of the April 2022 increase and future years because ALACE would not have to submit a claim and the Employers would not have to respond to it etc.

We would welcome the Employers' consideration of the proposal in this letter and hope that it may swiftly be agreed. In the event that the proposal is not accepted, ALACE reserves its right to consider other steps in respect of the offer for April 2021.

Yours sincerely,



Ian Miller  
Honorary Secretary, ALACE  
Officers' Secretary, JNC for Chief Executives of Local Authorities

Address for correspondence: c/o Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster DY11 7WF or [alacehonsec@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alacehonsec@yahoo.co.uk)