**Email sent to all MPs on 26 November 2013 about NJC Pay Claim 2014**

Dear

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT NJC PAY AND THE LIVING WAGE**

I am writing to ask for your support for the NJC Trade Union Side’s 2014-15 pay claim for 1,600,000 local government (NJC) workers. It is attached and I hope you will take time to read it carefully.

Our claim is for:

**A minimum increase of £1 an hour on the bottom scale point to achieve the Living Wage and the same flat rate increase on all other scale points above.**

We would like you to support us in our urgent quest for pay justice for our members. They are the nursery nurses, care workers, social workers, environmental health officers, school meals workers, housing advisors, teaching assistants, lawyers, civil engineers, librarians and many others who are keeping quality local services running in the face of a central government budget cut of over 40% and over 400,000 redundancies.

Almost a third of our local government workers – 515,000 – now earn below the Living Wage of £7.65 pence an hour. The bottom NJC pay rate is £6.45 pence. Everyone employed on NJC conditions has suffered an 18% decline in real earnings since 2010 – from the top to the bottom of the pay scale. Many are forced to rely on in-work benefits, food banks, pay-day loans and our own welfare services to survive.

As politicians across the political spectrum rightly call for action to end low pay and for the Living Wage to become the legal wage ‘floor’, we are also calling for it to become the lowest pay point in local government. We believe that to be just, prudent and the minimum our members deserve. Paying the Living Wage and restoring lost earnings for the lowest paid group in the public sector would not just lift many of our members out of poverty and in-work benefits: It would boost demand in the economy and increase revenues to the Treasury through tax and National Insurance ‘take’. In short, it could pay for itself.

Local government pay and conditions have fallen far behind other public sector groups. This cannot continue. I hope you will join us in calling for a fair deal for our members in 2014.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

Heather Wakefield

National Secretary for Local Government

UNISON