

# National Employers for local government services

**Jim Kennedy**  
**Trade Union Side Secretary**  
**JNC for Craft & Associated Employees**  
**Unite House**  
**128 Theobald's Road**  
**London WC1X 8TN**

27 July 2021

Dear Jim,

## **CRAFTWORKER PAY 2021**

I am writing on behalf of the Employers' Side of the JNC to respond formally to the Trade Union Side's pay claim.

The National Employers wish to make the following, final offer in respect of those employees whose pay is determined by contractual reference to the Craft JNC National Agreement ('Red Book'), as follows:

For all Craft JNC employees (regardless of job title and designation) whose rate of pay differs from the salaries set out in the Craft JNC 2020-21 pay agreement circular (dated 12 October 2020), but is still contractually linked to the annual settlement reached by the Craft JNC, the Employers' final offer is as follows:

- **With effect from 1 April 2021, an increase of 1.75 per cent on basic salary and allowances**

The National Employers believe that an offer constructed in this way is the best method of ensuring that those Craft employees on local pay rates which are nevertheless contractually linked to Craft JNC settlements, would receive a pay award.

For those few Craft employees who are paid the **specific** annual salaries as set out in the Craft JNC 2020-21 pay agreement, the Employers' offer is as follows.

- **With effect from 1 April 2021:**
  - **1.75 per cent on Building Labourer grade (equivalent to SCP2 on the NJC spine)**
  - **1.75 per cent on Heating & Ventilation Mate grade (equivalent to SCP3 on the NJC spine)**
  - **1.75 per cent on Building Operative grade (equivalent to SCP3 on the NJC spine)**
  - **1.75 per cent on Plumber grade (equivalent to SCP4 on the NJC spine)**
  - **1.75 per cent on Engineer & Electrician grade (equivalent to SCP5 on the NJC spine), and**
  - **1.75 per cent on all allowances**

These increases would continue the principle agreed by the JNC in the 2016-18 agreement to align the five Craft Grades to current pay points 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively on the NJC 'Green Book' pay spine.

**Other elements of your claim:**

***An increase in Grade and recognition for craft operatives that regularly use additional skills to support employer business needs***

The Employers maintain that all Craft roles are very adequately catered for by the job evaluation (JE) schemes used within local government. Model craft role profiles were produced in 2013 in order to assist the JE process locally. Many councils have successfully measured and recompensed all elements of a typical Craftworker's working conditions in the job evaluation process. Therefore, the Employers reject this element of the claim.

***A substantial increase in stand-by payments***

As set out in the National Agreement Part 3 Para 1.4(e)(v), standby payments are a matter entirely for local determination and not the JNC. Therefore, the Employers reject this element of the claim.

***A two-hour reduction in the standard working week***

The Employers reject this element of the claim in relation to a proposed 35-hour week. Such a reduction would be out of line with norms in local government and would result in an increase in costs that would adversely affect local authority services.

***Extra day of annual leave entitlement***

The Employers reject this element of the claim in relation to increased holiday entitlement. All Craft employees currently receive a minimum of 22 days' leave (plus two extra statutory days) with a further four days after five years' service (ie. **28** days). This is already more than the minimum entitlement for NJC 'Green Book' employees which is 22 days (plus two extra statutory days) with a further three days after five years' service (ie. **27** days). Many local authorities have superior local provision.

***Recognition of the increased use of technology supported by an additional payment***

The Employers consider the use of technology to be an increasingly common practice in the modern workplace that does not merit additional recompense. Therefore, the Employers reject this element of the claim.

***Modernisation of tool allowance to accurately reflect the cost of tools provided by the worker – or all tools must be provided by the employer***

The provision of tools by either the employee or the employer is a matter entirely for local determination and not the JNC. The Employers' offer is set out above; namely that this allowance is increased by 1.75 per cent on 1 April 2021.

***Increase in tool insurance to reflect the actual cost of replacing tools***

The Employers' offer is set out above; namely that this insurance is increased by 1.75 per cent on 1 April 2021.

**Commitment to the continuation of the ‘Red Book’ agreement**

The Employers believe that Craft roles can be properly remunerated through other pay and grading structures. However, they are currently content to retain the national bargaining arrangements whilst councils continue to directly employ Craftworkers on JNC conditions.

***Commitment to insourcing of work and implementation of the Construction Charter***

The Employers maintain that all decisions on whether work is insourced or outsourced are a matter entirely for local determination and not the JNC. Therefore, the Employers reject this element of the claim.

The Employers note that your claim states, “...Unite is campaigning to ensure all procuring authorities involved in the financing of construction sector infrastructure projects sign up to the Construction Charter...” and goes on to acknowledge that, “...the Charter has been signed by multiple local authorities across England and Wales...”. The Employers therefore believe that such issues are a matter entirely for local determination and not the JNC. Therefore, the Employers reject this element of the claim.

The National Employers hope this offer can quickly form the basis of an agreement between the two Sides so that employees, who continue to provide such critical support to their communities, can receive a pay rise as soon as practicable.

Yours sincerely,

*Naomi Cooke*

**Naomi Cooke**  
**Employers’ Secretary**

cc Karen Leonard, GMB