



PM/PG/AH

18th September 2020

Mr Kevin Hanson
Contract Manager – Environmental Services
Citizen Services
Serco UK

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Dear Kevin

Please find information below which relates to April 2020 pay review and other matters relating to the Richmond contract.

Pay claim

I understand from you that there were numerous discussions surrounding pay with the Council and prior to the transfer and yet nothing substantial has been put forward or implemented. What has become clear is that NJC has awarded a 2.75% uplift on all pay and allowances to Council employees and, in certain circumstances, its contractors, depending on the date of outsourcing.

There are some fundamental differences between direct employees of the authority and those outsourced; the biggest driving factor is that those employed by contractors do not have a say on their pay and are solely reliant on third party. I have also not been able to identify as I have seen no evidence to show that the grades of these ex-NJC staff were ever assimilated from manual workers grades to those covered under the 'Green Book'. It is known as the old APT&C grades; most of these grades gave an uplift in the region of £1300 per year, once assimilated. I am fully aware that, after reviewing those on NJC terms and conditions, it appears that they are slipping backwards on their pay and have been for a number of years; this is more than likely the reason. It would also appear that London Weighting should have been consolidated in the early 2000s so it appears they are disadvantaged in their pensionable benefits and this needs to be addressed, hence the claims below.

Looking at the rates of pay for those staff on Veolia and other contracts are the worst I have seen for a number of years and are at a significant disadvantage, including those on supervisory grades and no London Weighting payments. After receiving considerable feedback from our members, there are some real concerns where any pay claim would lead but, no matter what, these items do need to be addressed immediately, not only to ensure the quality of staff is retained but also for the business to flourish.

After much reading of written feedback and discussions with our members and Reps, it would appear that the best way forward is to take the same approach when Wandsworth and Richmond Council became one authority; that would be to align pay scales with the Wandsworth Serco contract. I note the pay on the Wandsworth contract has been dealt with by me for many years, going back to Biffa and Verdant days, and has no ex-Local Authority staff employed by them. Therefore, our pay claim from 1st April 2020 is a simple one, that being:

GMB, BRITAIN'S GENERAL UNION

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1. All loaders move to £14.25 per hour
2. All drivers move to £16.04 per hour
3. All bonuses and allowances to be consolidated into the basic rate of pay
4. Two days extra leave per annum
5. Those staff who are in excess of the above would be subject to a 5% pay increase on all pay and allowances; this would include supervisors and consolidated.

Bank Holiday catch up

I have received substantial feedback on the above and I understand that many staff have either been paid various amounts of monies, some x1.5, some x2 and some a single payment on supervisory grades and those on agency have varying amounts and the vast majority have worked every day of the catch up following a Bank Holiday over the last six years. What is clear is that I could not find any staff who were given a day in lieu for the working of catch up. I have asked staff to sign a collective grievance template and, if required, I would submit a formal grievance on behalf of our members and add a further dispute notice, should this be required. I am, however, aware that this would be a distraction and add further costs to Serco. For this reason, I would suggest sitting down with you to find a way forward, in the first instance, with a view to resolving the matter. In essence, most staff are owed in the region of 48 days each.

Job and knock

Feedback from the staff has shown that the above has been in place prior to the outsourcing of the contract from the Local Authority and would be considered as an implied term (custom and practice). What does concern staff is that the rounds are not all equal in workload, so this area does need to be addressed in order to ensure fairness to all. The understanding from the membership is simply to finish your allocated work each day and then you go home. There has never been a position whereby teams have to go back out to cover others work; this shows there is an unfair workload and causes difficulties. Our members would object to any variation to the current job and knock process so I would urge you to re-look at workloads to again ensure parity as this is the way forward so as not to cause unnecessary difficulties.

Bullying

Many of our members have reported blatant rudeness and out and out bullying by some staff. Whilst I have not asked our members to provide written statements and raise a collective on this issue, can I ask that all staff and managers are reminded of appropriate behaviour within the workplace? A timely reminder for everyone would be most welcome, so that any issues are put to bed quickly before they become an issue.

LGPS pension

I am aware that Serco and the members are now paying into a 'pot', to ensure the monies are paid into a scheme. Can you also provide written confirmation that any losses in the scheme that relate to loss of accrued growth would be addressed by Serco, as this is a huge concern to our members?

Collective bargaining and recognition agreement

Whilst I am aware, as are you, that we have sole bargaining, meaning that no other trade union can deal with this, I still await your signed copy of the agreement. Please can this be signed and sent back to me? As you are new to GMB Southern Region, it is important to state that, whilst our Reps undertake representation etc, they cannot, under our procedures, sign off collective bargaining agreements, as these have to come to me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul Grafton".

Paul Grafton
Membership Development Officer

Cc: GMB members