

UNION TO ENTER TALKS WITH LOCAL GOVT EMPLOYERS

UNISON's local government National Joint Committee (NJC) has today voted unanimously to back further talks with Local Government Employers, aimed at settling the current dispute over pay.

Discussions between UNISON, Unite and the Local Government Employers led to an understanding that talks can go ahead, with a timetable to be agreed at a later date.

In the light of this decision the NJC agreed not to name a date for further strike action. Progress will be monitored over the coming weeks and the decision reviewed in September.

Last week, 500,000 council workers took part in a 48-hour strike over a 2.45% below-inflation pay offer.

UNISON general secretary Dave Prentis said: "Local government workers responded magnificently to the call for action last week. They contribute a huge amount to the local communities they serve and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

"Taking action was a tough decision for our members who are dedicated to serving the communities they live and work in, but their strong resolve has paid dividends."

UNISON head of local government Heather Wakefield added: "It is vital that we get this dispute sorted as soon as possible. Our members cannot afford to be the poor relations of the public sector. If the employers are serious about making local government an employer of choice they must realise they have some catching up to do.

"Over the summer we will continue our campaign to win the hearts and minds of government, the employers, and the public to the justice of our case."

