

Unite union vote against COSLA deal

Unite members working in Scotland's local authorities have voted to reject the revised pay offer put to them by Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), the body that represents councils in Scotland.

The result of the ballot on the revised offer was 55% to reject and 45% to accept.

The revised offer of 3.5 per cent (2018), 3 per cent (2019) and 3 per cent (2020) did not include a 'trigger clause' which would allow for the re-opening of the three year pay offer if, as predicted, Brexit causes inflation to rise.

The union says that the revised pay offer also fails to restore local authority workers to the levels of real terms pay from ten years ago.

The ballot for Unite craft members working across Scotland's local authorities will close on 4th February 2019.

Unite representatives will now hold a meeting to discuss the next stage in the process which could result in strike action.

Wendy Dunsmore Unite industrial officer said: "This result is clear indication that our members remain unhappy with COSLA's offer. Our members have suffered pay freezes followed by real terms cuts for far too long. This has impacted most on the lowest paid workers across the councils. COSLA will need to dig a bit deeper if we are to avoid industrial action."

The pay deal affects local authority budgets, especially in Edinburgh where they had factored in the increases agreed at the Special COSLA Leaders' Meeting on Friday 14 December to increase by a further 0.5% (to 3.5%) the employer's pay award for most non-teaching staff in 2018/19.

Edinburgh City council proposes that a provision of £1.8m is incorporated within the framework in respect of this additional liability. This also has a knock on effect in the current year. As well as this, the teaching trade unions have intimated rejection of the proposed three-year offer and approved plans to ballot their members on industrial action. The council has not estimated any increase for this in its budget, but assumes that any additional funding necessary to achieve settlement will be provided by the Scottish Government.