



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

16th January 2021

Dear Confrontant,

RE: PUBLIC SECTOR PAY

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of public sector pay; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

I am grateful for the commitment and selflessness of public sector workers, including the civil service, who have kept people safe and ensured vital services could continue during the coronavirus outbreak. Their work has been exemplary.

That is why I am glad that almost 900,000 public sectors workers received above-inflation pay rises this year. This included a 3.1 per cent pay rise for teachers, a 2.5 per increase for police and prison officers and a 2 per cent increase for members of the armed forces. Nurses are continuing to benefit from a separate scheme agreed in 2018. The Government ended the across-the-board 1 per cent cap on public sector pay rises in 2017 and for many this is the third successive year of pay rises.

The gap between the wages of those in the private sector and those in the public sector has increased significantly, however, since the start of the pandemic. According to the ONS, in the six months to September, private sector wages decreased by 1 per cent. Public sector employees saw their wages rise by nearly 4 per cent over the same period.

While I fully understand your desire to see a pay rise, workers in the private sector are losing their jobs, being furloughed and seeing wages cut. The Chancellor has said it would be difficult to justify continued pay increases across the whole of the public sector. The Government is instead increasing pay for the majority of public sector workers. This includes over a million nurses, doctors and other NHS staff. Around 2.1 million public sector workers who earn below the average wage of £24,000 will also be guaranteed a pay rise of at least £250.

The National Living Wage and the National Minimum Wage will also increase and likely benefit over 2 million people. A full-time worker on the National Living Wage will have received a pay increase of over £4,000 since the policy was first introduced in 2016.

Civil servants have worked exceptionally hard over the last year and I understand your wish to see an increase in pay. Government guidance on pay awards is clear that awards for civil servants must ensure value for money for taxpayers and be mindful of the prevailing economic conditions.



Pay for civil servants below the Senior Civil Service is ultimately the responsibility of individual government departments and I would encourage you to contact Human Resources in your department for further guidance.

Civil Service Pay Remit guidance 2020 allowed departments to make average awards within a range of 1.5 to 2.5 per cent. Senior Civil Service pay is based on recommendations from the independent Senior Salaries Review Body.

I understand your concern about public sector pay and performance related payments awarded to people working in senior positions in the public sector. The pay of employees in the public sector is largely set by individual government departments and I would be happy to discuss the issue of performance related pay for lower grades with my parliamentary colleagues. I am glad that the Chancellor announced in November that those earning below the average salary of £24,000 in the public sector would receive a pay increase of at least £250.

Many key workers including delivery drivers, supermarket assistants and those working in the social care sector work for private companies. The Government has little influence over the remuneration set by these firms but ministers are raising the National Living Wage (NLW) to £8.91. This means that full-time workers on the NLW will see their pay increase by £345 next year. A full-time worker on the National Living Wage will have received a pay increase of over £4,000 since the policy was first introduced in 2016.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you, then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,
Tom

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**