**JTU/09/2022 8 July 2022**

**PROBATION PAY NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE**

Pay negotiations between Napo, UNISON, GMB SCOOP and senior probation service management have been taking place over the course of June and July. As we anticipated, the discussions have been especially challenging set against the background of the government’s punitive public sector pay remit.

The unions pay claim was for a multi-year pay deal for the Probation Service effective from 1st April 2022. Among other things, this will need to deliver a significant increase in the value of pay points, an end to pay band overlaps and the creation of a salary structure that addresses the huge pay gap between our members and workers in comparable public-facing professions outside of the Probation Service.

We have been told by the Probation Minister, the Director General and senior management, that improving probation pay is also a top priority, and that they are committed to delivering such a deal.

Yesterday, Napo and UNISON’s respective negotiating committees considered a full progress report and provided democratic oversight of the progress made in the talks so far. The view of both committees was that while progress has undoubtedly been made, the parties are still some way apart from finalising a pay offer that unions would feel able to recommend to their members. At talks today the feedback from yesterday’s meetings of the Napo and UNISON negotiating committees was relayed to the employer. There are plans for the unions and employer to continue negotiations next week. GMB reps have also considered the progress and are committed to providing a single consistent response with Napo and UNISON.

**Next steps**

As has always been the case, the Joint Trade Union side will seek to exhaust the negotiating process to try and achieve an offer that we can recommend, but the employer has been left in no doubt that if necessary we will return to test the strong mandate from our members that caused Napo and UNISON to lodge a joint trade dispute earlier this year.

While we are not in that position yet, we are mindful of the growing anger across many sister trade unions over public sector pay policy. This has seen a number of unions commence industrial action or plan for ballots over the coming weeks. The unions will be monitoring the situation carefully and more news will be provided to members as soon as possible.