

Napo maintains pressure on CRC pay

Over the last few months Napo negotiators have achieved some important breakthroughs in our longstanding campaign to seek pay parity for our members employed in the Community Rehabilitation Companies. This has been a difficult task to say the least, and the levels of engagement between CRC employers and the unions have seen a mixture of positive outcomes alongside some very disappointing responses.

Below is a summary outlining what has been achieved so far:

SEETEC

SEETEC KSS CRC eventually made a pay offer at the turn of the year covering staff across all of their regions for 2020/2021. The offer followed a marked improvement in industrial relations between senior SEETEC Management and the unions and was a major factor in the offer being possible. This was in stark contrast to the attitudes and practices that were demonstrated by Working Links when they operated in the CRC areas that SEETEC took over in February 2019.

SEETEC KSS CRC were the first employer to declare that they were prepared to match the current NPS pay rates; a signal breakthrough for Napo in our long running campaigns to achieve pay parity across both arms of the Probation service. The offer tacitly recognised the need to motivate and retain existing staff and also make the company more attractive to potential employees. Indeed, within days of the pay offer becoming public, Napo learned of a number of employees from a neighbouring CRC leaving to take on better paid jobs with Seetec. General Secretary Ian Lawrence adds: "This should serve as a serious warning to all of Seetecs competitors or any would be bidders for new Probation Contracts."

Union members subsequently voted by a huge majority to agree to the realignment of all salary bands to the current NPS Pay Scales. This resulted in 74% of the workforce receiving an increase of 4% or above, and 52% of the workforce receiving an increase of 5% or above.

While this settlement brought the pay dispute to a welcome end, the unions have reserved the right to make further representations if pay developments elsewhere warrant this.

Durham Tess Valley CRC.

The DTV CRC pay deal for 2020/21 and 2021/22 covers the remaining 15 months to contract end in June 2021, the pay deal provides a guaranteed minimum pay award of 6%, payable from April 2020 and assimilation onto the NPS pay scales. This means that the new pay scales will significantly reduce the time to progress through each pay band and the value of progression will be larger than in the current pay structure. Also, the offer guarantees each member of staff a minimum increase of 6% and some staff will receive a greater increase.

As this offer met our demand that the pay scales at DTV CRC are aligned to the NPS. Napo recommended acceptance of the pay offer and as a consequence Napo members voted overwhelmingly to accept the offer. The result of the ballot was 92% accept and 8% reject with a 50% turnout.

Sodexo

The Sodexo Pay Offer covers the six Sodexo CRCs (Northumbria, Cumbria & Lancashire, South Yorkshire, Essex, BeNCH and Norfolk & Suffolk). The pay offer covers the years 2020/21 and 2021/22 (contract end). This offer is for a two year pay deal and is being made following the work undertaken in previous years to modernise the pay structure so staff will reach the top of the scale within a much shorter timeframe.

The main terms of the offer are below:

2020/21 Pay Offer

2.5% Non-consolidated payment for those at the top of their pay band
A minimum pay increase for all other staff of 2.0%. For most this will be achieved through incremental progression however in instances where incremental progression is less than 2.0% a non-consolidated payment will be made.

2021/22 Pay Offer

2.5% Non-consolidated payment for those at the top of their pay band
A minimum pay increase for all other staff of 2.0%. For most this will be achieved through incremental progression however in instances where incremental progression is less than 2.0% a non-consolidated payment will be made.

Despite not meeting all the unions' aspirations Napo and UNISON believe that this is the best deal achievable by negotiation taking into account the unique circumstances we find ourselves in because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, the unions did not make a recommendation to members and it is up to the members to decide. A ballot on the offer has been initiated and will conclude on the 27 April and members will decide to accept or reject the offer.

MTC

Pay talks commenced in February. The first session since the imposition of a pay award last year backdated to April 2019 which saw Staff moved up one spinal point and a non-consolidated payment of 1%, staff at the top of their scale received a 2% payment. The back pay element of the agreement was only relevant to basic pay not overtime or allowances.

The theme of disappointment continued as MTC declared that their ability fund a pay award for 2020/21 was challenging. Napo stated that if MTC want to invest in people, then they have to pay a going wage, otherwise this would impact on attrition rates in their CRCs in London and Thames Valley.

It was noted that one of MTC competitors had put out a pay offer to match NPS pay banding. Napo also said that if MTC were among potential bidders for new contracts, the employer needed to do much better on Pay.

Interserve

The unions have submitted our claim ([CLICK HERE](#)) and employer has provided us with pay data, but they haven't done the work to cost our claim. For this reason a meeting to discuss the claim was postponed from this week. It will now take place in the coming week.

WWM

Pay talks are still delayed and the unions are pressing for engagement to take place soon, but the unions have submitted the joint pay claim referenced below. A further update will follow once there is more news to report.

RRP

Pay discussions have got underway after a long delay, but have not got off to a good start with the employer claiming that the company are unable to fund an additional pay award beyond the cost of annual increments .

Napo and our sister unions are now consulting with members to test their views on a range of responses, but the next step will probably be an approach to the RRP Board to express members' disappointment. Napo will also point out that if RRP see themselves as serious potential bidders for the intended Intervention and Programme Contracts from June 2020 they will be lagging seriously behind their likely competitors.

What we are seeking for our CRC members

The National Executive Committee agreed the following generic pay claim for CRC members at its meeting in March.

1. A two-year claim to cover 2020 and 2021
2. A substantial increase in the value of all pay points in both years of the claim above the Retail Prices Index (RPI)
3. Movement of existing CRC pay spines to align with current NPS Pay bands and Automatic Pay Progression (in both years of the claim) in line with the agreed formula for 2018 2- year NPS pay modernisation award
4. Deletion of Pay Band 1 where this still exists
5. Overlapping of pay bands (where relevant)