



Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority
Carrochan
Carrochan Road
Balloch
G83 8EG

Name: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
FOI Ref: 2025-010
Date: 01 April 2025

Dear [REDACTED]

REQUEST UNDER FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

Thank you for your email of 13 March 2025, in which you have requested access to information held by the National Park Authority. We have processed your request under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and have provided our response below.

Your Request

In the context of an email discussion relating to the National Park Authority's staff pay award for 2024-2025, you asked us to provide you with:

"...a copy of the Equality Impact Assessment that you relied on to impose the pay award."

Our Response

It is important to note that the National Park Authority (NPA) did not rely on an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to impose its staff pay award for 2024-2025. As such, we do not hold an EIA that was used to impose the pay award. However, having reviewed the email exchange which led to your request, we assume that your intention was to seek access to the EIA that was conducted in relation to Unison's proposal of a one-off non-consolidated payment for all NPA staff. Therefore, a copy of this assessment, which formed the basis of the NPA's decision to reject Unison's proposal, on the grounds that its implementation would be discriminatory, has been attached to this response.

To provide further context on this matter, we have also attached an email that was sent to all National Park Authority staff by our Chief Executive, on the 07 March 2025.

Right to Review

If you are unhappy with our response, you can ask us to review the way we have handled your request. Information about our review and appeals process is provided in the attached sheet.

Yours sincerely

**Information Management
Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority**

Review Procedure

If you are dissatisfied with this decision, or the way in which the Authority has dealt with your request, you are entitled to require the Authority to review its decision. Please note that in order for a review to take place you are required to:

- Send your request for review in writing, setting out in full the reasons why you are requesting a review.
- Submit your review request within 40 working days of either the date on which you received a response from the Authority or the date by which you should have received a response under the terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, whichever is the later.
- address your review request to:

Information Manager
Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority
National Park Headquarters
Carrochan
Carrochan Road
Balloch
G83 8EG
E-mail: info@lochlomond-trossachs.org

The review will be handled by staff who were not involved in the original decision. You will receive notice of the result of your review within 20 working days.

If you are not satisfied with the response to your request for review, you can contact the Scottish Information Commissioner, the independent body which oversees the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, at:

Scottish Information Commissioner
Kinburn Castle
Doubledykes Road
St Andrews
Fife
KY16 9DS
Tel: 01334 464610
Website: www.itspublicknowledge.info
E-mail: enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info

EQIA Form

Please read and refer to the [Equality Impact Assessment Guidance](#) document whilst completing this template.

1. Name of project/policy:

Project/Policy Name	Unison Wage Negotiations Proposal – 28/02/2025
Author	
Others involved in the assessment	-
Date(s) of assessment	06/03/2025

2. Description of project/ policy:

Background	As part of the 2024/25 Pay Negotiations with Unison, the Trade Union have suggested re-purposing the money that has been ring-fenced for Pay Progression to instead fund a £284 one-off payment to all staff. The National Park need to analyse this proposal before they are able to make a formal offer to the Union.
Purpose and outcomes	The purpose of this assessment is to establish whether any groups of people with protected characteristics will be unfairly disadvantaged by this re-purposing and, therefore, whether the National Park should make a formal offer to Unison on this basis.
How it links to NPPP/Corporate Plan/ Operational Plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Links to the Public Sector Pay Policy and further guidance issued from the Scottish Government.- Forms part of our contractual commitments to our staff and our Partnership Agreement with Unison.
How we intend to implement the project/policy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- If the proposal is found to be fair, then a formal offer will be made to Unison in line with their suggestion.- Any payments will be managed by Payroll; there will be additional communications which need to be issued to all staff regarding the outcome.

3. Who is the project/ policy likely to impact on and how? If there is no significant impact proceed to Q.7

Does the project/ policy have the potential to impact on the equality groups? Please provide a brief description including any evidence.	<p>(1) The offer has the potential to adversely impact the younger members of the workforce. Statistically, they are less likely to be at the top of their grade – and, therefore, more likely be due to receive an increment. This means that, potentially, they will disproportionately be losing-out in terms of salary and also superannuable benefits.</p> <p>(2) The offer has the potential to adversely impact the female members of the workforce. Statistically, they are less likely to be at the top of their grade – and, therefore, more likely be due to receive an increment. This means that, potentially, they will disproportionately be losing-out in terms of salary and also superannuable benefits.</p>
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4. Think about the impact the project/policy will have on eliminating discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups. Also consider whether there is potential for discrimination.

Useful sources of evidence are:

<https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/ods-web/home.html>

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality/Equalities/DataGrid>

<http://www.equalityevidence.scot/>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-equality-evidence-strategy-2017-2021/pages/8/>

EqlAs completed by other Staff

You should also consider other relevant information we have as an organisation such as community, visitor & staff surveys, complaints & so on. [This folder](#) has been set up for staff to save such information, however conversations will be required with staff as not all evidence will be saved here & live pieces of work will be ongoing.

Protected characteristic	What do we know about this group in the context of this project/ policy?	What is the potential impact (positive, neutral and negative) on people who share the characteristic?	What could we do to reduce any negative impacts, maximise positive impacts? What further evidence should we collect?
Age	Younger staff. They are less likely to be at the top of their grade due to their length of service and, therefore, more likely be due to receive an increment. This	NEGATIVE - They will miss-out financially by receiving less money, less pension and the payment will not be consolidated into future years' payments.	In terms of the offer, there are no actions we could take to reduce the impact. For analysis, we should run figures

	means that, potentially, they will disproportionately be losing-out in terms of salary and also superannuable benefits.		from the HR system which will indicate whether this is the case.
Disability	No discernible impact	N/A	N/A
Gender reassignment	No discernible impact	N/A	N/A
Race	No discernible impact	N/A	N/A
Religion or belief	No discernible impact	N/A	N/A
Sex	Female staff, They are less likely to be at the top of their grade due to their length of service and, therefore, more likely be due to receive an increment. This means that, potentially, they will disproportionately be losing-out in terms of salary and also superannuable benefits.	NEGATIVE - They will miss-out financially by receiving less money, less pension and the payment will not be consolidated into future years' payments.	In terms of the offer, there are no actions we could take to reduce the impact. For analysis, we should run figures from the HR system which will indicate whether this is the case.
Sexual orientation	No discernible impact	N/A	N/A
Pregnancy and maternity	No discernible impact – the potential impact on female staff is outlined above, but there is no additional discernible impact on those who are pregnant or on maternity leave.	N/A	N/A
Marriage/civil partnerships	No discernible impact	N/A	N/A

5. Who will be consulted internally or externally on this EqIA?

The Human Resources Team – they will need to provide data to allow analysis of the possibilities listed above.

6. What is/are your recommendation(s) based on this equality impact assessment?

My recommendation is that the National Park do not make this offer to the Union, as it will be indirectly discriminatory on the basis of age.

7. Please provide a meaningful summary of how you have reached the above recommendation(s)

- A report was run from the HR system on 06/03/25, which included the following columns of data for analysis:

[Employee's Age]

[Employee's Gender (for HMRC purposes)]

[Whether the employee was at the top of their salary band]

- Using this data, analysis took place to calculate the percentage of people at various age bands, to determine the effect of not paying an increment.


- The analysis found that 100% of staff aged under 30, and 95% of staff between the ages of 30 and 39, would suffer a material detriment if they were not given an increment but were given the one-off payment instead.

- On balance, this would indicate that this potential award would be indirectly discriminating on the basis of age.

- With regards to gender – 63.2% of women and 62.8% of men would suffer a material detriment if they were not given an increment but were given the one-off payment instead.

- This would indicate that, on balance, this potential award would not be discriminating on the basis of gender.

8. Sign off:

Assessment signed off by:	 <i>HR Manager</i>
Sign off date:	06/03/2025

From: Gordon Watson
Sent: 07 March 2025 09:39
To: Lochlomond
Subject: CEO Update - 2024/25 Pay Award - Please Read

Importance: High

Good morning

I am pleased to be able to provide you with an important update on the 2024/25 Pay Award. I am sharing this with the intention of providing all staff with more detail on the process we must follow, the negotiations we have entered into with Unison (our recognised union) along the way and the position we have now reached in implementing a Pay Award.

Your 2024/25 Pay Award

Firstly, **I can confirm that in your March salary payment, you will receive your 2024/25 Pay Award, and where relevant, your pay progression, backdated to 1st April 2024, as part of a wider package of commitments** detailed later in this email.

The process each year

As a non-departmental public body, accountable to Scottish Ministers, we are required to follow pay guidance and approved protocols set out by Scottish Government.

The key stages every year are:

1. Pay guidance issued by Scottish Government (SG).
2. The National Park Authority (NPA) applies the guidance to deliver the fairest award and assesses the affordability of the Pay Award to the organisation.
3. NPA submits a business case to SG for our proposed Pay Award.
4. Once SG approves the Pay Award, NPA makes a formal pay offer to Unison, our recognised union.
5. Unison ballots its members on whether to approve/reject the proposed Pay Award.
6. The outcome of the ballot dictates the next steps:
 - a. If Unison members vote to accept the Pay Award, payment is made to staff.
 - b. If rejected, negotiations continue with Unison, who then ballot their members on any revised offer.

It is important to note that **we must make a Pay Award by no later than 31st March each year or we must hand back that ringfenced budget to Scottish Government**. There is no opportunity to continue Pay Award negotiations across financial years or to pay for a previous year's Pay Award in the following financial year.

The 2024/25 process

This year we entered into a lengthy period of negotiation with Unison about the 2024/25 Pay Award. During that time the National Park Authority made an original offer, and a revised offer to Unison.

When Unison balloted its members on each of those offers, it was rejected by the majority of members both times.

Last week, Unison tabled a further proposal, that the National Park Authority should use funds normally ringfenced for progression within pay bands (movement through the pay band range from the minimum to the maximum) and redistribute this as an equal cash payment among all staff including staff ineligible for progression because they are at the top of their pay bands. The union proposal was for a non-consolidated payment (a one-off award that's not included in an employee's regular salary) of £284 per person (before tax), rather than the up to 2% progression for all staff who have not yet reached the top of their band (meaning no progression payment for any staff).

Assessment of the latest Unison proposal

We conducted an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) on the union's revised proposal, concluding that such a redistribution of progression funds is indirectly discriminatory toward younger staff members.

Additionally, a broader analysis found that the union's proposal primarily benefits staff earning below £17,500 (below our lowest salary band of £20,811) or those at the top of their pay bands - a minority of employees.

After review, **we have concluded that it would not be appropriate to propose offering a Pay Award that benefits only a small portion of staff and is indirectly discriminatory.** I also consider such a non-consolidated redistribution of pay awards to be manifestly unfair especially on staff who would expect a progression payment. As a result, we have rejected the union's proposal and consider negotiations for the 2024/25 Pay Award concluded **as we must now implement an award before the financial year concludes.**

As such, I can confirm that the NPA's second revised offer, is now being implemented as the Pay Award for 2024/25:

- A basic pay increase of 3% applied to Bands A-G
- Up to 2% pay progression for employees who have not yet reached the top of their band
- Continued commitment to no compulsory redundancies
- One week of paid carers' leave—exceeding the legal requirement of one week of unpaid carers' leave
- A commitment to jointly review and provide recommendations regarding updates to pay bandings, progression, and the job evaluation policy
- Committing to paying the real Living Wage of £12.60, with automatic annual implementation of the updated rate each October and backdated accordingly to October 2023.

Next steps

HR and Finance colleagues are working incredibly hard to process this payment in line with our usual payroll run, meaning all backdated pay due from 1st April 2024 will be paid to all staff on 14th March 2025. My sincere thanks go to everyone who is working to make this happen.

Also thank you to all of you for your patience in relation to this matter. I sincerely hope we can make much earlier progress on concluding the pay award within 2025/26.

Best regards

Gordon Watson
Chief Executive

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park

Direct: [REDACTED]

www.lochlomond-trossachs.org

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www.facebook.com/lomondtrossachs