



the union of choice for senior managers
and professionals in public service



24 April 2020

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall
London SW1A 2AS

Dear Michael,

We understand that you will soon receive submissions from the Cabinet Office regarding the 2020/21 pay remit process for the civil service.

As you have recognised publicly, the civil service is performing extraordinary feats to respond to the new priorities from the pandemic, whilst at the same time maintaining vital public services and transforming their ways of working almost overnight.

From those in the vanguard of fighting the pandemic in DoHSC, PHE and HSE, to those addressing the consequences for the public in HMRC and DWP, to the thousands of civil servants who have volunteered to be redeployed - or indeed those who are transforming how they work - civil servants are performing heroic tasks on a daily basis.

As you know, each year the Government issues pay remit guidance for civil service departments and organisations, following consultation with the National Trade Union Committee. Once issued, each of the 250 separate employers covered by the guidance then conducts its own pay negotiations with trade unions. This can, rightly, take up to three months before the outcomes are implemented and ties up valuable time and human resources, which at this stage in the pandemic should be - and are - focused elsewhere.

Civil servants, managers and the trade unions are working as one to respond to this emergency. It is our strong view that to undertake business as usual on the 2020 pay round, necessitating as it would more than 200 sets of potentially protracted pay negotiations and ballots, is a distraction that the service does not need.

We want to be clear: this is not a plea for special treatment. We have strong views on the merits of the current system and outcomes for our members, but that is an argument for another day. As unions who participate in the negotiating process with hundreds of civil service employers each year, we understand the drain on time and resource that this process takes. Our request is that exceptionally, in 2020, we reach an agreement on a simple, fair pay outcome for all civil servants covered by the remit process which can be implemented quickly. This would have the benefit of freeing up vital resources at a time of national emergency and send the strongest possible signal to civil servants that the Government values their contribution.

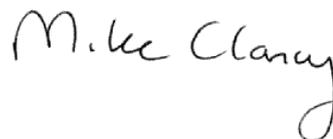
We would, of course, want to discuss with you and your officials the detail of any pay settlement. Our request takes place against the backdrop of the Scottish Government announcement that civil servants working for the Scottish Government are to receive 3% alongside other public sector staff in Scotland and MPs in Westminster receiving 3.1% from 1 April. A similar announcement for staff covered by the Cabinet Office remit guidance would be welcomed by our unions.

It would, understandably, include exceptions for organisations that are about to undertake or in the middle of major pay reform. We recognise that there will be many complexities to be resolved, but if the response to the pandemic has shown us anything, it is that with focus and leadership, obstacles that were previously thought insurmountable have been swept aside in a matter of days.

We are happy to make ourselves available at our earliest convenience to discuss these issues.



FDA General Secretary



Prospect General Secretary