

Management Side – JNC for Coroners

Mr Richard Travers
Local Government & Salaries Secretary
of the Coroners' Society of England and Wales

24 March 2026

By email: richard.travers@ejudiciary.net

Dear Richard,

Following our face to face meeting on the 19th March, members have asked me to express their sincere thanks to you (and David Ridley) for coming into Smith Square to meet with them face to face. We appreciate the time, and the good nature of that conversation, coupled with some regret that we didn't do that sooner.

We agreed we would capture in writing, the position on behalf of the management side of the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) as was, or as they decided they might want to be better known as: the Local Government side.

Members were keen to express their view that the current situation is not helpful for either local authorities or Coroners. Given the time and energy from all sides having to engage in potentially awkward local debate and discussion, alongside the risks of different levels of salary increase being agreed across the country, members were keen to explore how a solution to the current situation could be found.

Reflecting on comments made by the local government side, the golden thread was an understanding of your frustration, and a large amount of agreement with many of the points you set out.

By way of underlining a genuine will to put the JNC back together, members also set out the following offer:

- 1) Members fully accepted the point about Coroners being judicial office holders and committed to capturing that point more clearly in our communication and consultations with local authorities going forward.
- 2) Members committed to having greater regard to the pay increases awarded via the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB), while noting that as the funding of the Coronial Service sits with local government, this process would always be a negotiation.
- 3) To that end, and as a gesture of intent, they suggested moving the annual pay review date (which currently sits at 1 April each year) to a point in time that enables the SSRB process to have concluded (which is generally over the summer period) so that it could be taken account of in those annual negotiations in a meaningful way.

- 4) The current Coroners pay structure was codesigned by both sides of the JNC with the support of Korn Ferry Hay in 2017. You articulated a view that you feel base salaries were out of step with where you felt they should be. Avoiding a lengthier debate that might be had on this point, members underlined their existing offer to revisit the Korn Ferry Hay report in such a way yet to be agreed. Members explained they would have to have some sort of evidence-based process to explore salary levels but offered additional talks to establish the Terms of Reference for a process that could be acceptable to both sides.
- 5) Members asked that you share this offer with your members.

By way of a final point, may I add that members were very taken with the points you made about the importance of independence in relation to any judicial pay settlement. Understanding this increased the determination from the local government side to reconvene the JNC, because that national forum must surely provide greater independence and neutrality in exploring a fair and appropriate pay review, outside of local circumstance and relationships.

Members made the offer of this meeting and have set out the issues within their control to seek to find a way forward. We were grateful for your frank discussion and look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Ward
Local Government/Management-side secretary (JNC Coroners)