

GMB launch British Gas strike ballot after company refuse to withdraw threats to workers



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GMB, the energy union, is to launch an official British Gas strike ballot after the company refused to withdraw its threat to fire and rehire 20,000 workers.



In July, British Gas owners Centrica unveiled plans to fire and rehire the entire workforce if they didn't accept detrimental changes to their pay and terms and conditions.

In August, 95% of members said they would be in favour of industrial action in an indicative ballot.



The most the company was prepared to do was delay the fire and rehire threat until January.

Now they face the prospect of industrial action over Christmas.

Justin Bowden, GMB National Secretary, said:

"People don't like threats and bullying and GMB members are no different.

"British Gas issued an ultimatum in July to fire and rehire 20,000 workers in the middle of a national health emergency.

"GMB warned them that members were angry, with a 95% vote for action in August.

"We sought to get the threat off the table. The best that they were prepared to do was postpone the ultimatum until January.



"This is an insulting response to these essential workers - keeping homes across the nation heated in the depths of winter.

"Anger has boiled over as members have now seen the full proposals and how they impact them.

"GMB has responded by giving the go ahead for an official national strike ballot. We will shortly announce the dates for the ballot.

"All the signs are that a national strike in the gas industry is weeks away if British Gas don't stop their playground bullying tactics which threaten to disrupt energy supplies and services to customers over the Christmas and New Year period.

"GMB's plans will exempt vulnerable elderly households from the impact of the action.

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079859 1525698

press.office@gmb.org.uk

Click to contact your local GMB Region

info@gmb.org.uk

