Rachel Reeves unveils plans to help millions of workers

Rachel Reeves will today deliver a keynote speech at a GMB event to mark the launch of Everyday Work – a new pamphlet that outlines proposals to improve conditions for millions of workers.

Click Here for Everyday work pamphlet

The pamphlet focuses on the state of work in modern Britain and how Labour should embark on approach that would improve wages and working conditions, as well as empower ordinary workers. The strategy would be a key part of rebuilding support following the party's General Election defeat in December.

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The speech will take place at 2pm on Saturday February 22 at the Holiday Inn, Wakefield Rd, Garforth, Leeds LS25 1LH

Based on a series of interviews with GMB Members in Yorkshire, the paper argues that Labour needs to put work at the heart of its strategy to reconnect with its lost voters.

In the report, Leeds West MP Rachel Reeves argues that Labour needs an agenda for improving modern, everyday work found in every part of the country, particularly in areas still impacted by the legacy of deindustrialization

Sectors like care, retail, and many of our public services are the backbone of all our communities, but too often workers within them are under-appreciated and have suffered from deteriorating pay and conditions, she says.

Sponsored by the GMB union, the pamphlet focusses on addressing the needs and priorities of people in those industries.

New policy proposals contained in Everyday Work include:

- New Royal Colleges in sectors such as social care to recognise the status and expertise of workers, and give them a role in shaping best practice and improved standards.

- An industrial strategy which puts improving work, wages and productivity in everyday sectors like care and retail at the heart of Labour's policy proposals.

- A renewed focus on lifelong learning and childcare

Neil Derrick, GMB Regional Secretary, said:

"People's working lives have undergone huge change in the past few years -and for too many people that change is not for the better.

"'Full employment' in 2020 means having three jobs just to make ends meet.

"Job security is almost a nostalgic throwback to a different time, while underemployment is the blight on our society that unemployment used to be.

"These vital recommendations show how we can restore fairness to every day work, make sure workers are properly valued and rewarded."

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Rachel Reeves said:

"In December, voters across Yorkshire turned away from Labour. The decline of industrial work is a big part of the story of Labour's decline in many parts of the country. A story about the economy and work that can bridge some of the divisions in our country will be an important part of our road to recovery.

"The Government repeatedly point towards the number of people in employment. But this masks the real story: of a productivity crisis, on the one hand, and on the other of an increasingly raw deal for workers – stagnant and low pay, high insecurity, poor training and progression, and poor work-life balance. Increasingly, people in the UK are working more; but they are working more to keep their quality of life standing still.

"Workers in our public services, and in everyday jobs in care or retail, are the backbone of our society. As individuals and communities, we would be lost without them. But they have faced some of the worst effects of our changing labour market over the last decade.

"The need to make lifelong learning a reality is a big part of the story. The fact that a staggering 56% of the working-age population have the numeracy level expected of a primary school child brings home the need to make life-long learning a reality.

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"This pamphlet is about improving working conditions, pay, and status for the huge number of workers in Britain who do work we all rely on, but who are frequently overworked, underpaid, and under-appreciated."

Press office

079859 1525698

press.office@gmb.org.uk

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Click to contact your local GMB Region

info@gmb.org.uk

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