

11 more Eastbourne strike days after council refuses to meet



Eastbourne refuse collectors will go ahead with a further 11 days of industrial action after the council refused to meet with GMB Union.

The union says a face-to-face negotiation is vital to talks as the lead representative, Mark Turner, is visually impaired and struggles to use Zoom and similar online platforms.

Eastbourne council has so far ignored requests for a meeting on 12 January and a request for a meeting on 13 January has also thus far been left unanswered.

Mark Turner, GMB B50 Branch Secretary said:



“The council’s only focus appears at this time is to try to break the strike and blames GMB for the inconvenience to the residents of Eastbourne.



“We hoped they might take responsibility for this mess – given they’ve moved the service back towards being in-house through an arms-length company. Since then they have done nothing to improve the poverty pay rates or welfare, health and safety of their workers.

“My visual impairment means that online meetings can be difficult for me and in person conferences allow me to be properly involved in the discussions – especially when they are so important.

“Unfortunately this simple request appears to be beyond the council, so we have to waste our time chasing them to meet rather than resolving the dispute and bringing the strike to a conclusion.

“Ending walk-outs and avoiding rubbish piling up in the city’s streets was within the grasp of the council if they only showed a real willingness to get back around the negotiating table.”

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