

Unions call for a 10% pay rise for local government workers



Boris Johnson needs to put his money where his mouth is and help reverse the last decade's brutal cuts

The three largest local government unions, representing 1.4 million employees in schools and councils across England, Wales and Northern Ireland have today (Wednesday) submitted a pay claim that attempts to reverse the real terms pay cuts suffered by local authority staff since 2010.

The claim for the year from next April would see the lowest paid staff earning at least £10 per hour, and all other council employees receiving a ten per cent pay rise.



UNISON, GMB and Unite's joint claim also includes a one-day increase to employees' annual leave entitlement and a two-hour reduction in the standard working week. It also calls for a review of the workplace causes of stress and mental health issues.

Rehana Azam, GMB national secretary said:

"Our members deserve a real pay rise. Boris Johnson needs to put his money where his mouth is and help reverse the last decade's brutal cuts to our members' quality of life.

"Local government workers' earnings have been devalued by up to 22%. After ten years of real terms pay cuts our demand for a 10% pay rise and a minimum of £10 an hour is more than reasonable.

"Two out of three people now want the government to increase spending on public services – and all political parties agree the public sector needs greater investment.

"GMB is campaigning for pay justice. It's high time the government started properly investing in our public services and local government workers."

UNISON head of local government Jon Richards said:

"Council staff have paid a heavy price during the years of austerity, keeping services going when cash was in short supply and hundreds of thousands of their colleagues lost their jobs.

"The government claims the cuts are behind us, but no new money behind the recent pay announcement for teachers, police officers and the armed forces suggests otherwise. The new PM should make good the damage of the past, and fund local government properly to protect jobs, wages and services."

Unite national officer for local government Jim Kennedy said:

"We are strongly supporting a 10 per cent pay increase and a £10 minimum rate claim for local government workers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for the year starting April 2020.

"There are other highly important elements to our claim that revolve around work life balance and the wellbeing of our members mental health.

"Our claim is based on the fact that local government staff have borne the brunt of the government's harsh austerity regime since 2010. Our members have seen their pay cut in real terms by 22 per cent since then and they need a substantial pay lift in recognition of the dedicated work that they do to keep council services running smoothly 24/7."



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