



Staff who kept local services & schools running deserve real pay rise

27 Jul 2021

Staff working for council and in schools are worth more than the 1.75% pay offer put forward by employers after working through the worst of times, say unions representing local authority workers

GMB, UNISON and Unite are urging local government employers to rethink their revised pay offer of a 1.75% pay rise (with 2.75% for those on the bottom pay point) for 2021/22 and award an increase that will properly and fairly reward council and school support staff.

The unions say the offer falls well short of the 10% claim put forward for this year.

Last month, the unions offered to work with the Local Government Association (LGA) on a joint campaign to make the government provide additional funds to finance the wage rise. However, the LGA rejected the move, refusing to put pressure on government to improve pay.

GMB national secretary Rehana Azam said:

“School staff, refuse collectors and council workers have kept our country moving through the coronavirus crisis, often putting themselves in harm's way.

“Now they are being told by local government employers all they deserve is a pay cut. It's a woeful pay offer.

“Local government employers refused to jointly make representation with the unions to



the chancellor on pay, which is frankly disgraceful.

“Local Government workers know they need a proper pay rise – and this isn’t it. GMB will now meet with reps to discuss next steps for a ballot on the offer and if this leads to industrial action, members will have our full support.”

UNISON deputy head of local government Mike Short said:

“A 0.25% increase on the initial 1.5% offer is insignificant. Council staff have kept communities clean and safe, protected the most vulnerable, and worked in schools throughout successive lockdowns to allow others to work.

“Their courage and sacrifices need to be rewarded, yet the employers are failing to recognise their efforts. There’ll be a huge impact on morale.

“Employers say they’d like to give council staff more, but they’ve refused to work with us to get the money.

“These workers, mostly women, are amongst the lowest paid in the country and have seen their pay drop substantially in recent years. This 1.75% offer is nowhere near what’s needed. Reps from across England, Wales and Northern Ireland will now decide the next move.”

Unite national officer Jim Kennedy said:

“Local government workers will see right through the employers false claims that this is a pay rise. It is nothing of the sort it is yet another miserable real terms pay cut.

“Local government employers are guilty of rank hypocrisy on the one hand they say they recognise the critical work that our members have undertaken, especially during the pandemic, and on the other they are intent on imposing a real terms pay cut on workers.

“If the employers have any conscience whatsoever they will not be able to sleep at night after making such a miserable, morale destroying pay offer.”\

