

Public Services Section BULLETIN



6 December 2012

UNIONS DEFEAT REGIONAL PAY THREAT

I am sure you will be aware that the government announced earlier this year its intention to break up national pay arrangements in the public sector and move to regional pay. You will also be aware that GMB and other unions have mounted a strong campaign to defend national pay across the public sector and we have pointed out the serious impact this lunatic policy would have on public sector workers throughout England and Wales and the effect on local economies.

Alongside the Chancellors terrible autumn statement yesterday the government also slipped out a statement from Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg on regional pay. I reproduce the statement in full below because you need to read it to believe it; the government has done a complete u-turn, they are not going to proceed with regional pay!

Here is Nick Clegg's statement:

"The Coalition Government will not impose new regional pay rates or zones from the centre – and we won't be returning to regional pay during this parliament. I want public sector workers to rest assured: what matters is how hard you work, not where you work, and that isn't about to change.

I have been clear throughout that I would not support a move that either short-changed public sector workers or exacerbated the North/South divide at such a difficult time.

It's clear to me how worried our public sector workers have been, that – on top of all the other pressures they're under – they'll face a pay postcode lottery as well.

We are yet to see hard evidence to prove the claim that public sector salaries are crowding out business growth. And, on the contrary, there's a real concern that any steps that reduce wages would take money out of local people's pockets, hitting the local high street hard.

Public Sector workers should have the confidence and stability that come from national pay bands. So they will remain. The case for regional pay has been looked at. It's been lost. And, for this Coalition Government, that case is now closed."

This is a tremendous victory for a hard fought campaign that has united all the public sector unions and most importantly the threat of cutting public sector pay across whole swathes of the country has been stopped dead in its tracks.

Yours sincerely

Brian Strutton

Brian Strutton
National Secretary - Public Services Section

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