

GMB members in schools and local government will take industrial action on July 10th

Why Local Government staff need a pay rise

Since 2010, local government pay has increased by only 1%. If local government pay had kept pace with inflation, it would be £2,000 higher by now. Estimates suggest that when below inflation pay increases and increases to pension contributions are taken into account, some local government staff have seen up to an 18% pay cut in real terms.

500,000 local government workers earn less than the living wage, most of them part-time women who rely on state benefits to make ends meet.

In October the National Minimum Wage will overtake local authority pay scales. You can't legally pay any lower than Councils do.

What's the position of the two sides?

The TUs lodged a claim for an across-the-board £1 an hour pay rise. This would bring the lowest paid up to the Living Wage. The Local Government Association employer representatives made a first and final offer of 1% for most people with extra for the lowest paid. The offer is worth 1.07% on the pay bill. TU members strongly rejected the offer but the LGA has declined any further negotiations.

Why are GMB members going on strike?

Quite simply, they feel they have no choice and GMB agrees. Local government staff deserve a fair pay rise. They've been offered a paltry 1.07%. They've rejected that but been told the LGA won't negotiate. Our members are typically school dinner ladies, classroom assistants, binmen, street cleaners and care workers and they are very angry at the lack of respect they are being shown. They voted 73% to strike.

Unison and Unite members will also be taking action on July 10th as will teachers and civil servants which potentially means 2 million people on strike.

What's the solution?

The tried and trusted way of resolving an impasse like this is by using independent ACAS arbitration. That would allow the LGA to present their affordability arguments and the TUs to present their cost of living arguments.

GMB would be prepared to recommend that members accept ACAS arbitration rather than strike and we would abide by any ACAS decision.

Or would the LGA prefer a strike?

What candidates, councillors and fellow members can do:

- Support our call to avert a damaging strike by using ACAS arbitration by writing to David Sparks, the new Labour chair of the LGA. You can email him at: info@local.gov.uk.
- Join GMB members on the picket lines to show your support — why not send us some photos?
- Tweet us @gmbpolitics @gmbcouncillors @brianstrutton or email brian.strutton@gmb.org.uk if you have any questions