

**Grow**

**Build**

**Change**



# Local Government and Austerity

**GMB Congress 2019  
CEC Special Report**

# GMB Congress 2019: CEC Special Report

## Local Government and Austerity



### Introduction

- 1.1. GMB is proud to be the union for local government workers and all those who deliver local government services.
- 1.2. Austerity is pushing local government to breaking point. The world was not plunged into financial crisis because councils employed too many refuse workers. Care workers were not responsible for the bankers' sub-prime mortgage feeding frenzy. But, over a decade on, low paid public service workers and the people who rely on the services they provide are still paying the price.
- 1.3. Local government is in the grip of a financial stranglehold that is threatening the future of even statutory services. Billions have been stripped from local authority budgets and almost a million jobs have been lost since 2010. The cuts are disproportionately falling on women workers, and women who rely on council services.
- 1.4. This CEC Special Report is intended to set out the background to the local government funding crisis and the devastating impact that austerity is having on GMB members, whether they work in local government or depend on local government services.
- 1.5. Building on existing Regional and national activity, this report aims to set out a policy and organising agenda that will deliver a fairer and more sustainable future for local government.
- 1.6. The report does not address matters directly related to schools as GMB policy on this area was recently set out in the CEC's Special Report on Schools and Colleges that was carried by Congress 2018.

## Funding cuts

- 2.1 Local councils have been forced to accommodate devastating budget cuts since the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats came to office in 2010. Local government budgets suffered the most significant cuts of any department as the Conservatives – and their allies in the right wing press – demonised councils as ‘bloated bureaucracies’ that were paying the price for a supposed ‘decade of profligacy.’<sup>1</sup>
- 2.2 As a consequence of these extreme cuts, the National Audit Office has warned that trends in local councils ‘are not financially sustainable over the medium term’ and that ‘there are risks to statutory services.’<sup>2</sup>
- 2.3 Central government funding for councils fell by 49 per cent in real terms between 2010/11 and 2017/18 in England, according to analysis by the National Audit Office. Even after taking business rate retention into account, councils’ overall spending power has fallen by 29 per cent over the same period despite a rise in demand for services.<sup>3</sup>
- 2.4 Budget cuts in England have had serious consequences for council financing in the rest of the UK due to the effects of the Barnett Formula, which adjusts devolved nation funding following spending decisions made at Westminster. GMB recognises that, up to a point, the devolved administrations were able to take different, and often difficult, decisions which have avoided the very worst excesses of local government funding cuts compared to England.
- 2.5 One recent study found that, on average, spending cuts on local government services were twice as deep in England than they were in Wales and Scotland between 2009/10 and 2016/17, although cuts in some areas (such as Glasgow) have been particularly harsh<sup>4</sup> and Scottish local authorities have taken on a number of new responsibilities over the same period.

## Local Government and Austerity: Funding cuts

2.6 Local authority total income (including grants, business rates and council tax) in Wales fell by 7.5 per cent between 2009/10 and 2016/17. There is some evidence that the scale of grant reductions has been marginally more severe in West Wales and the Valleys – where deprivation rates are higher – than in East Wales.<sup>5</sup>

2.7 Audit Scotland recently warned that 'between 2013/14 and 2019/20, total revenue funding has fallen six per cent in real terms [and] Scottish Government funding to councils is forecast to continue to reduce in the medium-term.'<sup>6</sup> Scottish councils faced a funding gap of around £300 million in 2018/19.<sup>7</sup>

2.8 A 2017 report by the Fraser of Allander Institute found that Scottish local authorities' financial settlements had declined by around ten per cent since 2010/11. It warned that, as Scottish local authorities have also taken on a number of 'new burdens,' the true scale of the funding reduction is likely to be significantly greater.<sup>8</sup> There are significant differences between funding systems in England and Scotland: grant funding in Scotland includes school funding and business rates revenue, but it does not include fire and rescue or public health funding, and as such funding reduction figures are not strictly comparable between nations.

2.9 It is more difficult to obtain figures on local government finance in Northern Ireland than it is for the rest of the UK. In addition, councils in Northern Ireland discharge fewer functions than their counterparts elsewhere. Nevertheless, councils in Northern Ireland spent more than they received in revenue in 2016/17, and the Local Government Auditor noted that councils had raised financial 'pressures resulting from constraints on central government budgets that impact on local government.'<sup>9</sup>

2.10 The Conservative-controlled Northamptonshire County Council effectively ran out of money in 2018. Two Section 114 notices were issued – banning new spending on non-statutory services – the first

## Local Government and Austerity: Funding cuts

time that the measure had been taken since 2000. 'Inappropriate approaches' to budgeting and a 'truly perilous' financial situation were blamed, but the council's workforce and local residents are paying the price.<sup>10</sup>

2.11 Shortly after Northamptonshire County Council collapsed, it was revealed that Conservative-controlled Surrey County Council had an anticipated £105 million budget gap, despite the council representing an area with some of the highest average levels of wealth in the country.<sup>11</sup> More councils are believed to be in serious financial trouble, posing a risk to jobs and terms and conditions. An investigation by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism last year found that 'Somerset, Norfolk and Lancashire county councils are showing similar signs of financial stress as crisis-hit Northamptonshire.'<sup>12</sup>

2.12 Cuts have not been distributed evenly between councils. As Parliament's Public Accounts Committee has warned, under the Conservatives the areas with the highest levels of deprivation – and consequently the highest levels of demand for services – have been hit by the greatest cuts.<sup>13</sup>

2.13 According to recent research by the Labour Party, the ten council areas in England that have suffered the worst cuts funding cuts are all controlled by Labour. Meanwhile, the areas that have received comparatively generous settlements are overwhelming controlled by the Conservatives. In 2017, leaked text messages and recordings emerged which showed that the Conservatives had put in place a 'gentleman's agreement' to bail-out Surrey County Council – support which would not be available to Labour areas.<sup>14</sup>

**Biggest cuts in pounds per household** - The areas seeing the ten biggest cuts to spending power per household in pounds are all Labour-controlled.

## Local Government and Austerity: Funding cuts

Rank	Council	Political control	Change in spending power per household 2010/11 to 2019/20 in £
1	Hackney	Labour	- £1,432.03
2	Newham	Labour	-£1,356.83
3	Tower Hamlets	Labour	-£1,305.20
4	Knowsley	Labour	-£1,079.52
5	Southwark	Labour	-£1,059.66
6	Islington	Labour	-£1,026.64
7	Camden	Labour	-£980.41
8	Haringey	Labour	-£965.51
9	Hammersmith and Fulham	Labour	-£957.46
10	Liverpool	Labour	-£942.25

**Smallest cuts in pounds per household-** Eight out of the 10 areas seeing the smallest cuts to spending power per household are Conservative-controlled.

Rank	Council	Political control	Change in spending power per household 2010/11 to 2019/20 in £
1	Isles of Scilly	Independent	£347.51
2	Horsham	Conservative	£12.00
3	Hart	Conservative	£5.63
4	Uttlesford	No overall control	£2.11
5	Stratford-on-Avon	Conservative	£2.09
6	Surrey	Conservative	£0.19
7	Tonbridge and Malling	Conservative	-£0.06
8	Wokingham	Conservative	-£1.78
9	Vale of White Horse	Conservative	-£9.39
10	Tewkesbury	Conservative	-£9.50

*Labour party analysis based on House of Commons library research of local authority spending power 2010/11 and DCLG, core spending power, 29 January 2019, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/core-spending-power-final-local-government-finance-settlement-2019-to-2020>*

2.14 The overall scale of the financial challenge facing local government is difficult to overstate. The Local Government Association estimates that councils face an overall funding gap of £3.1 billion in 2019/20 which will rise to an estimated £8 billion by 2024/25 without urgent action. These estimates can be broken down as follows:<sup>15</sup>

Area	Funding gap in 2019/20	Funding gap in 2024/25
Adult social care	<b>£1.03 billion</b>	<b>£3.5 billion</b>
Children's services	<b>£949 million</b>	<b>£3.1 billion</b>
Homelessness support	<b>£110 million</b>	<b>£421 million</b>
Public health	<b>£473 million</b>	<b>£665 million</b>

## Local Government and Austerity: Funding cuts

- 2.15 Councils are being pushed to breaking point by a ferocious and unsustainable financial assault. The Government must restore funding levels based on need for all the constituent parts of the UK and ensure that future funding allocations at a minimum keep pace with inflation and rising demand.
- 2.16 Additional funding is needed, but reversing the cuts will not be enough. There is a growing body of evidence that current local government funding structures are flawed and harmful to ordinary working people.
- 2.17 Much of the current local governing funding structure dates from the early 1990s when the Major Government replaced the poll tax in a hurry. As a result, we have inherited a system that is based on often outdated and inconsistent valuations. It is also deeply regressive. On average, the poorest households spend seven per cent of their gross income on council tax after rebates – the richest households spend just one per cent.<sup>16</sup> The Resolution Foundation has warned that ‘council tax has come to look increasingly like’ the poll tax it replaced.<sup>17</sup>
- 2.18 Business rates are another important source of local government revenue. The Government intends that business rates will replace support currently provided through central grant funding. Unlike in Scotland, councils in England will not be protected against the risk of business rate revenue falling (which could be due to factors beyond a council’s influence, such as a collapse of a local industry). The Institute for Fiscal Studies has warned that without ‘significant redistribution of tax revenue capacity between councils, their ability to fund local public services would vary greatly’<sup>18</sup> – leaving poorer areas at risk of falling behind.
- 2.19 In addition to these problems, the business rates model has not kept pace with a world increasingly dominated by online purchases.

## Local Government and Austerity: Impact on services

Amazon pays just 0.7 per cent of its UK turnover on business rates. By contrast, some retailers with a physical presence on the high street pay 6.5 per cent. Without reform, there is a danger that brick and mortar businesses will disappear, along with hundreds of thousands of jobs. MPs have recently warned that 'high street retailers are paying more than their fair share of tax, while online retailers are not contributing enough.'<sup>19</sup>

2.20 Designing new tax systems is a notoriously complex activity. There are also relevant factors that are subject to fast-changing events: to take one example, if business rates were to be replaced with some form of sales tax then compliance with EU VAT rules would need to be established, but this factor may not apply in the future. Nevertheless, we believe in principle that reform to local government funding – including council tax and business rates – is urgently needed if we are to establish a system that is fair, progressive, and redistributive so that the local authority areas with the highest levels of deprivation can be fully funded after the age of austerity has finally been lifted.

### Impact on services

3.1 Funding cuts have been matched by savage cuts to services.

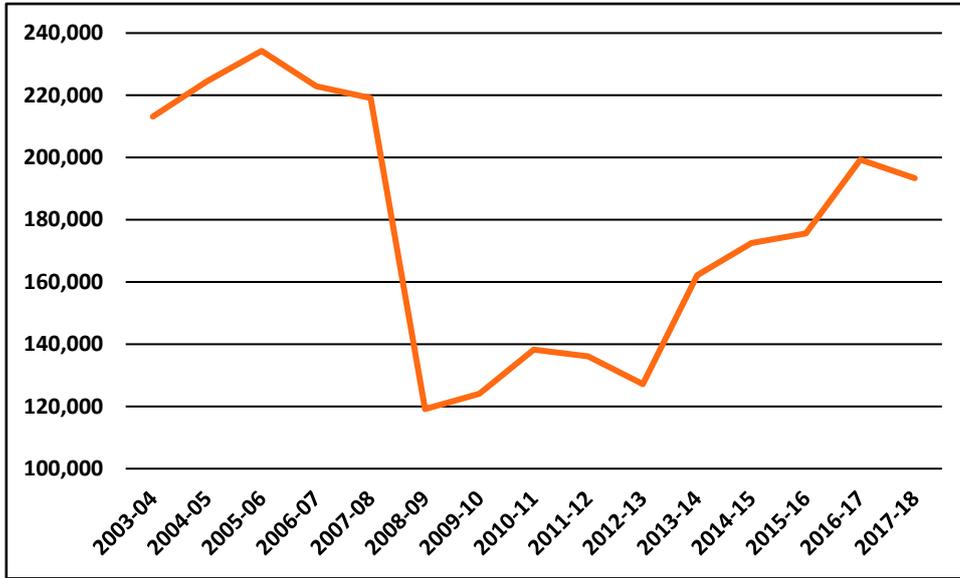
Whatever fat might once have been found in the system has long since been expunged. Funding reductions are cutting straight into sheer bone. While non-statutory services are most at risk, statutory services are also under threat. The situation in adult social care is so acute that it is discussed in a separate chapter in this report.

3.2 Despite David Cameron's promise that the Conservatives would lead the '*most family friendly Government we've ever had*,'<sup>20</sup> the Government's own figures show that at least a fifth of all Sure Start centres have closed since 2010.<sup>21</sup>

3.3 House building collapsed in the aftermath of the financial crash and recovery has been hindered by cuts to local authority housing,

planning, and economic development services. Housing starts remain at 12 per cent below their pre-crash level despite a recovery in recent years.

**UK house building starts (permanent dwellings)<sup>22</sup>**



3.4 The combination of ever more restricted housing supply and cuts to homelessness services is both tragic and deadly. The ONS experimentally estimates that almost 600 homeless people died in England and Wales in 2017 – an increase of 24 per cent in five years.<sup>23</sup> When adjusted for population, the local authorities where homeless people were most likely to die were Camden, Blackburn with Darwen, Westminster, Oxford, and Lambeth.<sup>24</sup>

3.5 According to the housing charity Shelter, 55 per cent of families who are in temporary accommodation are also in work, and the number of homeless families in work increased by 73 per cent between 2013 and 2017.<sup>25</sup>

3.6 Two-thirds of councils have cut their support for refuge services for women and children since 2010.<sup>26</sup> This in turn has increase pressure on homelessness services. Domestic violence is the third most common reason for local authority housing relief applications.<sup>27</sup>

- 3.7 Councils in England and Wales have reduced funding for bus services by 46 per cent in real terms since 2010, resulting in over three thousand routes being cut completely or downgraded<sup>28</sup> – cuts that hit young people, pensioners, disabled passengers and those seeking work the hardest.
- 3.8 The condition of our pothole-ridden local authority-maintained roads have deteriorated to the point that councils now have a £9.8 billion maintenance backlog that would take ten years to fix even if the funding became available.<sup>29</sup>
- 3.9 Funding for council youth services has been cut by a third since 2010. These cuts have been linked to the increase in gang crime by a coalition of organisations including Action for Children, Barnardo's, NSPCC, The Children's Society and the National Children's Bureau.<sup>30</sup>
- 3.10 Local authority funded Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) services are being cut back due to a combination of financial restrictions and changes to funding formulas. Statutory services are increasingly stretched, and local authorities are cutting discretionary services such as advisory teachers, expert case workers, dyslexia support, and provision for people who have hearing and/or visual impairments.
- 3.11 Council spending on waste collections declined by 17 per cent in real terms between 2010/11 and 2017/18, according to analysis by the BBC. Residents' complaints on the grounds of missed collections rose by a third since 2014 as GMB refuse members are expected to do ever more with ever less.<sup>31</sup>
- 3.12 Life expectancy is falling after many years of progress. The causes may be complex and disputed, but some academics have linked the trend to 'poverty, austerity and cuts to public services.'<sup>32</sup> These factors are likely to have been compounded by cuts to local authority funded preventative healthcare services.

## Local Government and Austerity: Outsourcing and privatisation

3.13 There is no sign that cuts to services are slowing: last year the mostly Conservative-controlled County Councils Network warned that 'the worst is yet to come.'<sup>33</sup>

3.14 All GMB members are affected by cuts to local government services – whether as local authority workers or as residents. GMB resolves to defend both statutory and non-statutory services and to seek a new political settlement that delivers the funding needed to sustain them.

### Outsourcing and privatisation

4.1 Outsourcing is no stranger to local government. However, in the current financial climate, outsourcing and austerity have become twin perils as councils chase any apparent means of reducing costs. GMB's policy, as set out in the 2018 CEC Statement on Outsourcing and Public Ownership, is to oppose attempts to outsource or otherwise privatise public services, and to seek to return services previously provided through the public sector to public ownership.

4.2 From 1980 onwards the Thatcher and Major governments forced an ever-increasing share of local government services into private hands through the Compulsory Competitive Tendering requirement, which was originally focused on Direct Labour Organisations. In reality, apparent savings from outsourcing were all too often realised by undermining wages and terms and conditions. One example can be seen in the bus industry following the break-up of most municipal bus companies: the real value of drivers' wages fell by 12 per cent between 1985 and 1994.<sup>34</sup>

4.3 We recognise that New Labour reduced some of the pressure to outsource on local authorities by replacing the Compulsory Competitive Tendering requirement with its alternative 'Best Value' framework. However, the climate of job insecurity in local government continued, and in some ways it was exacerbated after New Labour embraced the Conservative's ruinously expensive Private Finance Initiative model. GMB has been clear that the next Labour

government must learn from the mistakes of the last.

4.4 GMB analysis suggests that local authorities in Great Britain still owe a staggering £37 billion in future PFI charges – more than three times the value of the original investments that PFI funded. The figures would be higher still if school building charges were included. This is money that should be spent on services – especially against the current backdrop of austerity.

**Local authority PFI charges (2019/20 to 2044/45) – not including schools<sup>35</sup>**

Region	Amount invested	Amount still owed
East of England	£0.8 bn	£3.3 bn
East Midlands	£0.9 bn	£1.9 bn
London	£2.2 bn	£4.8 bn
North East	£0.6 bn	£1.9 bn
North West	£2.1 bn	£7.3 bn
South East	£1.3 bn	£5 bn
South West	£0.6 bn	£2.2 bn
West Midlands	£1.2 bn	£4.4 bn
Yorkshire & Humber	£1.6 bn	£4.8 bn
Not assigned	£0.1 bn	£0.2 bn
Scotland	£0.3 bn	£0.7 bn
Wales	£0.5 bn	£1 bn
<b>Great Britain</b>	<b>£12.2 bn</b>	<b>£37.3 bn</b>

4.5 Although case law has evolved, workers transferred under TUPE (whether as a result of PFI awards or otherwise) are not automatically entitled to transfer their full pension rights. This remains a significant area of apparent ‘cost savings’ for outsourcing authorities. GMB supports a review of the TUPE regulations to ensure that they provide more comprehensive protections for workers.

4.6 The liquidation of Carillion was a stark reminder of the risks that outsourcing poses to workers and contracting authorities. In the past year Interserve has collapsed into administration, and serious questions have been asked about the financial stability of other big

outsourcing firms.

4.7 GMB welcomes the decision that some authorities have taken to pursue an alternative path based on insourcing and the retention of public sector spending within local supply chains. These policies are at the heart of the much heralded 'Preston Model,' and we look forward to similar approaches being developed in other areas. We are already organising in new municipal enterprises such as local publicly owned utility companies.

---

*"The government says that outsourcing is everything, but while it might get you an initial cheaper price, that price simply doesn't last, you lose flexibility, and it causes a great deal of unrest."*

Eddie Martin, former Tory Leader of Cumbria County Council<sup>36</sup>

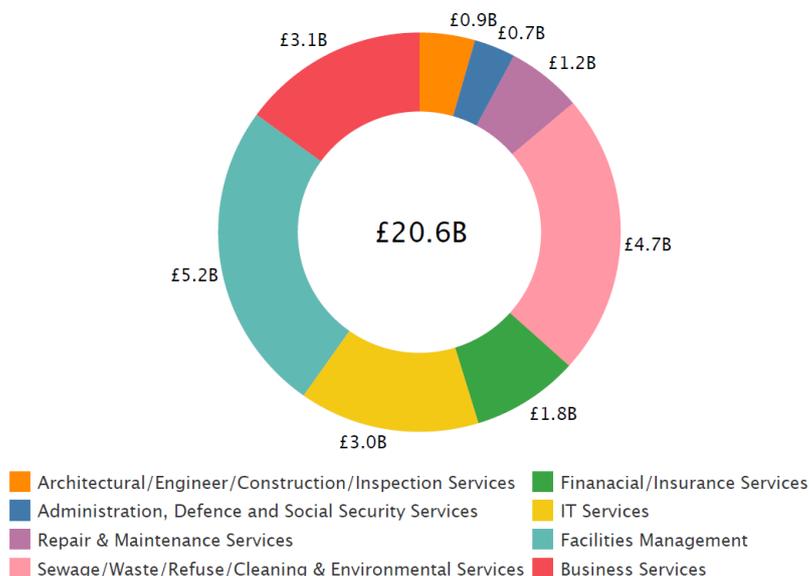
---

4.8 The outsourcing industry is notoriously opaque. Core principles of accountability and transparency are sacrificed as the cloak of commercial confidentiality envelopes ever-greater swathes of public services. The secretive nature of the sector means that even the amount of public money spent on outsourcing is withheld. The Cabinet Office recently refused a GMB Freedom of Information Act request on the grounds that releasing information on public spending on outsourcing would 'prejudice the commercial interests' of the Government and outsourcing companies.<sup>37</sup>

4.9 However, exclusive figures produced for this Special Report by Tussell, a consultancy that specialises in analysing outsourcing data, reveal that outsourcing contracts worth £20 billion have been awarded by local authorities (and associated bodies) in the UK over the last three years. Facilities management and waste management were the sectors at the highest risk of outsourcing.

## Tussell breakdown of Local Government outsourcing for GMB

Total Award Value – Sector Breakdown



Total Award Value – Devolved Breakdown

Region	Year	Value (£B)
England	2016	£4.40B
	2017	£6.90B
	2018	£4.97B
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£16.27B</b>
Northern Ireland	2016	£1.10B
	2017	£0.27B
	2018	£0.29B
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1.65B</b>
Scotland	2016	£0.93B
	2017	£0.43B
	2018	£0.12B
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1.47B</b>
Wales	2016	£0.74B
	2017	£0.11B
	2018	£0.31B
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1.16B</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>£20.56B</b>

4.10 Similarly, although anecdotal and employer-level examples of terms and conditions being undermined by outsourcing are common, robust evidence of the sector-wide effects of outsourcing is notoriously difficult to obtain. However, good quality data can be accessed for the social care sector in England. This data allows for direct comparisons to be made between local authority employed care workers and care workers employed through private providers.

### Comparison of LA-employed and privately-employed care workers Data from the Skills for Care National Minimum Dataset<sup>38</sup>

	LA	Private
Workforce jobs (headcount)	33,600	795,000
% on zero hours contracts	10.1	35.8
Average pay per hour (£)	9.8	8.12
Average annual pay (£)	18,900	15,700
% with no relevant social care qualifications	19.3	51.5

## Local Government and Austerity: Outsourcing and privatisation

Annual turnover rate (%)	12.5	38.5
% employed in sector for less than two years	12.9	36.1
Average annual sick days = 0 (% of workforce)	33.2	54.8

4.11 This data provides a sobering insight into the condition of privately employed care workers. They are more than ten times more likely to be employed on a zero hours contract than the average worker. Earnings are 17 per cent lower on average than their LA-employed equivalents, and four in ten workers leave their jobs every year. The only measure that the private sector appears to perform better on is days taken as sickness absence. This is, however, likely to reflect a lack of access to enhanced sickness schemes and high levels of presenteeism in the private sector.

4.12 In addition to welcoming proposals to end or restrict outsourcing, such as those recently put forward by the Labour Party,<sup>39</sup> GMB supports the extension of the Freedom of Information Act to private sector providers of public services. We call on the Government and the Office of National Statistics to collect and publish robust information on outsourcing contracts, including on the pay and terms and conditions of outsourced workers. We want to see legislative reform to better protect outsourced workers and an end to the two-tier workforce with equal rights from day one.

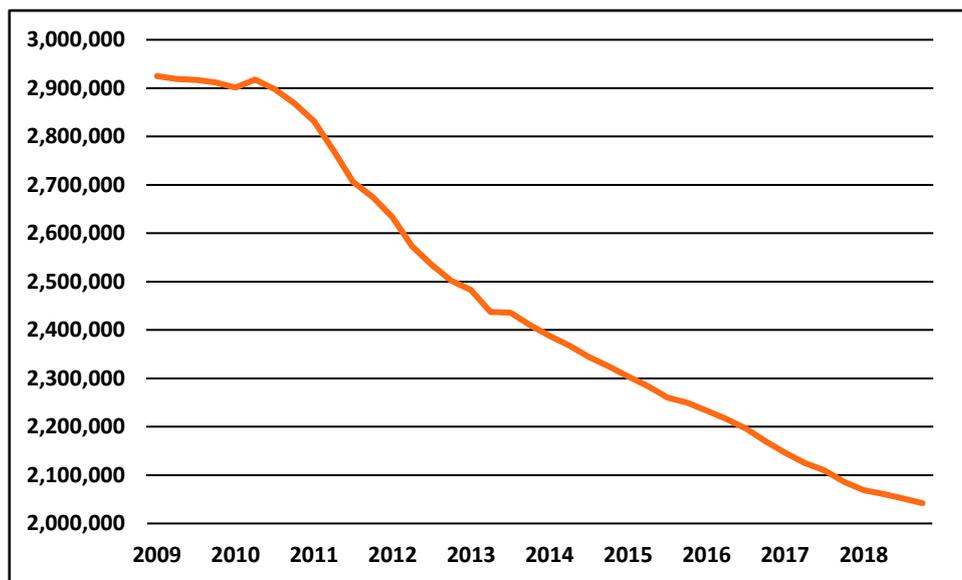
4.13 Outsourcing places unacceptable risks and burdens on workers and local authorities. Especially at a time of constrained budgets, GMB supports insourcing and measures to retain spending in local economies, and we also support greater oversight and accountability of existing outsourcing firms.

## Impact of austerity on jobs

5.1 Funding and staff numbers have suffered sharp cuts at the same time that demand is rising. GMB members describe being trapped in a vicious cycle as cuts to services lead to greater long-term demands on councils' resources.

5.2 Across the UK, an estimated 876,000 jobs have been lost in local government since June 2010 – a reduction of 30 per cent. Local government has arguably been hit by more severe job losses than any other part of the public sector. Redundancy payments have cost councils an estimated £4 billion in England alone.<sup>40</sup> As funding cuts continue to bite there is no sign that the trend is abating.

UK local government employment (headcount)<sup>41</sup>



5.3 Mass redundancies have inflicted misery on the workers who lost their jobs, and also on their families. It has also led to an explosion of pressure on the remaining workers who are constantly expected to do 'more with less.' A GMB study found that local government workers are significantly more likely to work unpaid overtime compared to those in other occupations.<sup>42</sup>

## Local Government and Austerity: Impact of austerity on jobs

- 5.4 Measures that were supposed to reduce the impact of cuts to funding and staffing levels have not delivered. A recent academic study found that the move to shared services did not cut the cost of delivery.<sup>43</sup> It has however left many of our members with higher workloads, more complex duties, and longer commutes.
- 5.5 Funding cuts have also been cited as a justification to undermine pay and terms and conditions. GMB has fought against attempts to undermine the National Joint Council agreement<sup>44</sup> and it remains our policy to resist attempts to opt-out of the national agreement.
- 5.6 Shamefully, some of the worst attacks on terms and conditions have been led by Labour councillors who have forgotten – or never learned – that the cause of the Labour Party is labour. GMB has even been faced with outrageous threats to ‘break’ the union by Labour authorities. In accordance with the 2018 CEC Statement on Political Strategy and Labour Party Reform, GMB will continue to hold Labour leaders to account and to push for structural changes so that affiliated trade unions and members have a say in the selection of council leaders.
- 5.7 Policies that target the local government workforce are likely to have negative equalities impacts. Three quarters of local government workers (and 84 per cent of care workers) are female.<sup>45</sup> The Government’s own impact assessment on public sector pay – which was obtained by GMB under the Freedom of Information Act – states that public sector workers are also more likely to be BAME and disabled than the average for all workers. These workers are at a higher risk of outsourcing, with knock-on adverse consequences for their pay and terms and conditions.
- 5.8 In line with the rest of the public sector, local government wages increases were held below inflation for almost a decade – an era of parsimony that was initiated when the local government employer side failed to make a pay offer in 2009/10. GMB estimates that most local government pay points have lost more than a tenth of their

real value, costing workers thousands of pounds in cumulative lost earnings.

5.9 Where official data is collected for occupations that are clearly linked to local government services, it is possible to compare changes in average real earnings since 2011 (strictly comparable data is not available for 2010 or earlier). According to these statistics the most significant erosion in real earnings has occurred in refuse and waste services. This may reflect higher average increases for the least well rewarded spine points, and increased outsourcing activity in refuse and waste services. These real-terms cuts in earnings have had a severe impact on our members' quality of life.

**Estimated median occupational earnings in Great Britain  
Figures in 2018 prices (uprated using the Retail Price Index)<sup>46</sup>**

	2011	2018	Change
Refuse & salvage occupations	23,907	19,592	-18.1%
Local government administrative occupations	23,609	21,713	-8.0%
Caring personal service occupations	14,976	13,990	-6.6%
Teaching assistants	13,137	12,551	-4.5%

5.10 Despite Ministers' often-repeated claim that they have no role in local government pay setting, hundreds of millions of pounds were removed from councils' grant funding in an attempt to enforce the pay cap (a decision that also lowered devolved nations' funding allocations).<sup>47</sup> A GMB Freedom of Information Act request revealed that Conservative Ministers continued to enforce their cap despite receiving advice that it would worsen child poverty rates and have a 'negative impact on family relationships.'<sup>48</sup>

*'Our economy should work for everyone, but if your pay has stagnated for several years in a row and fixed items of spending keep going up, it doesn't feel like it's working for you.'*<sup>49</sup>

Theresa May, October 2016

---



5.11 Local government pay was already below that of comparable roles elsewhere in the public and private sectors before austerity hit. Local government wages are 20 per cent below wider public sector rates on average. In 2012 the average annual payment from the Local Government Pension Scheme was around £4,200; for women it was just £2,800. This compared to an average UK occupational pension of £8,740 a year.<sup>50</sup>

5.12 GMB's *Pay Pinch* campaign played a critical role in breaking the punitive public sector pay cap policy. In 2018 a two-year deal was agreed in England, Wales and Northern Ireland that is delivering real-terms pay rises for low-paid GMB members. GMB recognises the critical role that Labour Party employer representatives played in pushing for a deal that was acceptable to our members.

5.13 In Scotland the union side agreed an improved offer in March 2019 worth 9.8 per cent over three years. This was despite the fact that the

## Local Government and Austerity: Social care

Convention of Scottish Local Authorities initially stated that its first offer was 'final.' As part of that deal, every local government worker will be paid more than the Living Wage Foundation rate for each of the three years. All GMB Scotland pay ballots are carried out in the workplace with ballots ran by officer and reps, which has strengthened internal structures.

5.14 These pay agreements, which reflected long and difficult negotiations, were achieved without additional funding from Westminster. When the next round of pay talks begin, it is vital that new money is provided by central government. If this does not happen then the Prime Minister's pledge to end austerity will have been exposed as nothing more than a hollow sham.

5.15 Cuts to local authority funding continue to impact on our foster carer members. Cuts to children's services directly impact the fees and allowances that foster carers receive. These cuts have also impacted on the access to training and support foster carers can receive from their local authority. GMB has been able to assist with this in some Regions with offering access to learning and education courses.

### Social care

6.1 Social care is at the crumbling front line of austerity. More people need assistance with tasks such as washing, dressing and eating than ever before, but funding levels have fallen. GMB members take pride in their profession but a combination of austerity and rising demand has pushed the sector to breaking point.

6.2 Medical advances mean that people are able to live longer and accommodate a more complex range of conditions than before. This welcome achievement has increased pressure on care services – the number of people in the UK aged 80 or over increased by 11 per cent between 2010 and 2017.<sup>51</sup> As a 2018 joint Select Committee investigation concluded: 'the system is not fit to respond to current needs, let alone predicted future needs as a result of demographic trends.'<sup>52</sup>

- 6.3 Despite growing demand and councils prioritising care budgets at the expense of other discretionary spending areas, funding for social care has fallen in real terms. Councils reduced spending on social care by 3 per cent in real terms between 2010/11 and 2016/17, and two thirds of local authorities with social care responsibilities drew down their financial reserves in 2016-17.<sup>53</sup>
- 6.4 The value of local authority fees to care providers has been steadily reduced. In 2017 it was reported that some local authority fees for residential care services equated to as little as £2.44 an hour.<sup>54</sup> Council scrutiny functions have also been reduced, contributing to widespread violations of minimum wage legislation.
- 6.5 MPs have warned that ‘non-payment of the national minimum wage is widespread [in the sector] as a result of providers failing to pay care workers for their travel time, travel costs and ‘sleep in’ shifts.’<sup>55</sup> Shamefully, instead of confronting non-compliance with minimum wage legislation following Employment Tribunal judgements, Ministers decided to ‘temporarily suspend minimum wage enforcement activity’<sup>56</sup> – thereby denying care workers an estimated £400 million in back-pay. At the time of writing, an appeal to the Supreme Court is due to be heard.
- 6.6 Although some additional funding has been provided through local and national sources, including through the introduction of the local government social care precept, a significant funding gap remains. A number of estimates put the funding gap at around £1 billion, and MPs warned last year that the gap could be as high as £2.2–£2.5 billion.<sup>57</sup>
- 6.7 Three years ago Congress carried a CEC Special Report on Social Care. The issues identified in that report have not been resolved in the intervening period. They have deepened as austerity continues to bite. Low pay, poor terms and conditions, lack of access to training and progression, and inadequate recognition of care workers’ skills and experience continue to hold the sector back.

## Local Government and Austerity: GMB - campaigning in local government

6.8 Brexit has introduced new uncertainties. Over 200,000 health and social care workers are EU nationals, a figure that has increased by 72 per cent since 2009.<sup>58</sup> In the event of a Brexit that restricts the current labour market, on current recruitment and retention trends, it is difficult to see how the sector can meet its workforce requirements.

6.9 Social care is trapped in a national crisis that demands a national solution. That is why, alongside organising in the workplace, GMB is acting as the secretariat of the new All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Care. We have also formed the Careforce initiative with HC One, the UK's largest care home operator. This initiative seeks to promote the professionalisation of the social care workforce at a national policy level, and celebrate, promote, and develop care work as a positive career option.

6.10 GMB has been clear that the fragmentation of the social care market can only be addressed through the establishment of national standards and national collective bargaining, in line with the commitment by the union (which has also been adopted by the Labour Party) to extend collective bargaining into those sectors that are currently denied it.

## GMB - campaigning in local government

7.1 GMB is a modern, 21<sup>st</sup> century campaigning union. At a time when services and our members' jobs are under threat, we know that the best response to austerity is to fight back and organise.

7.2 Nationally, our campaigning response is being carried forward under the banner of the *GoPublic* campaign. This national campaign builds on the outstanding work being done every day by GMB activists. While GMB undertakes more campaigning activity than can be captured in a single Special Report and the cases listed here are examples and not a definitive list, it is important that the work and

achievements of our members is recorded and celebrated.

7.3 GMB has been at the forefront of the battle to protect services at risk from austerity, such as when Birmingham and West Midlands Region led the campaign to save Birmingham City Council children's centres from privatisation and risk of closure.

7.4 GMB has organised to prevent outsourcing both industrially and politically. Earlier this year North West and Irish Region successfully lobbied to prevent the planned outsourcing of leisure facilities by Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council.<sup>59</sup>

7.5 In 2018 Labour-controlled Reading Borough Council proposed 'huge scale' outsourcing and privatisation plans. The majority of those proposals were defeated after GMB Southern Region led intense lobbying of the council and Labour Party, with activists commenting that 'Labour Party councillors were elected to manage public services, and not give lucrative contracts to private companies.'<sup>60</sup>

7.6 We are fighting to bring outsourced services back in-house. London Region secured a commitment to insource services in Brent after the union warned that workers at one cleaning contractor's site were expected to use a hole in the floor as a toilet.<sup>61</sup>

7.7 In some council areas a significant portion of services have been parcelled out into long-term contracts that are difficult to unpick. In Sheffield, services have been dominated by Veolia, Kier and Amey. GMB Yorkshire and North Derbyshire have responded to this fragmentation by building density and improving the union's organisational strength at sites across the city. This work has given GMB the strength to resist attacks on our members, including through strike action where necessary.<sup>62</sup>

7.8 GMB Wales and South West Region works closely with the Labour Welsh Assembly Government to develop policies that champion the interests of working people. The Welsh Assembly Government has

## Local Government and Austerity: GMB - campaigning in local government

developed positive policies including an ethical procurement charter, a two-tier code, and policies to tackle blacklisting, unfair employment practices and false self-employment. GMB has contributed to the work of the Welsh Assembly Government's Fair Work Commission, which had not reported at the time of writing.

7.9 When Northamptonshire County Council collapsed and its ruling politicians failed, GMB Midlands and East Coast Region was there to support the workforce and the Region ran a high-profile campaign for fair treatment and a sustainable financial settlement.<sup>63</sup>

7.10 GMB is leading the way in organising and campaigning in the care sector. GMB Northern Region recently secured a commitment from Cumbria County Council that it intends to sign up to the Careforce campaign.<sup>64</sup> Earlier this year GMB Scotland defeated 'horror show' split shift proposals in Dundee that would have seen some care workers losing out on up to £4,500 a year.<sup>65</sup> An ERS ballot returned an outstanding 99 per cent rejection of the proposed changes. An ERS ballot returned an outstanding 99 per cent rejection of the proposed changes.

7.11 GMB supports foster carers in their disputes locally and this year we were successful in protecting pay and allowances of foster carers in the Nottinghamshire area. This achievement comes on the back of other local successes in previous years.

7.12 The last year witnessed one of the significant industrial disputes in GMB's history as thousands of women struck for the pay justice that had been denied to them by Glasgow City Council. The strike was the biggest industrial action in Glasgow since the 1970s, and the biggest equal pay industrial action in the history of the UK.

7.13 The strike was won by GMB Scotland members and staff who persisted despite threats to engage Tory anti-trade union legislation, and vile, personal attacks on social media. GMB extends its congratulations and solidarity to all those who fought and won this historic dispute.

7.14 The resolution of a dispute dating back over a decade was justly celebrated by the women who fought for and won what was rightfully theirs. But for the union, as GMB Scotland has said, the strike's aftermath should be a cause for reflection and honesty about our past decisions and priorities.<sup>66</sup>

7.15 We must be honest about times when the union's past actions reflected a failure to fight for the people who pay our wages and depend on us for a fair deal in life. Equal pay has shown us how to campaign and fight as a good trade union should. We cannot change the past but together we can change the future.

7.16 The Glasgow equal pay strike embodied the best traditions of our union. We should be proud to carry forward the legacy of Mary Macarthur and the National Federation of Women Workers. It was the GMB's predecessor unions that brought the first successful claims of equal pay for equal work, and equal pay for work of equal value.<sup>67</sup> Our union is always at its best when it campaigns fully to defend our members' interests.

7.17 Consequently, activism, organisation, and the fight for pay justice, wherever it needs to be had, are at the heart of the *GoPublic* Public Services Section national platform campaign.

GoPublic



8.1 *GoPublic* is the GMB Public Services Section platform national campaign for public services, and against austerity, outsourcing, and

pay injustice. It is based on the based on the five following core principles:

### 8.2 Campaigning for public services funding

Public Services have been starved of resources following years of underinvestment and austerity. GMB will step up its campaign to make the case for fair funding for all our public services. Unlike the private sector, public service has no alternative but to develop strong campaigns to challenge government ideology on funding and budget allocations to government departments.

### 8.3 Challenging outsourcing and privatisation

The collapse of Carillion was a warning that the fragmentation of our services for personal and private profit has had its day. We need public services that are accountable to the communities they serve, not to fat cat executives or shareholders. We continue to make the case against public money lining the pockets of business at the cost of service delivery and workers. Outsourcing is a bad deal for workers and a bad deal for the public.

### 8.4 Winning pay justice for public service workers

A truly high quality public service means good pay terms and conditions not joining the race to the bottom. We will fight for equal pay, challenge the narrative of how women's work is arranged and campaign to change this. Continue to campaign to improve pay terms, conditions; restore earnings and pensions that fairly reward the work of public service workers regardless of what sector they work in including outsourced workers.

### 8.5 Celebrating the role of public service workers

Public service workers are the backbone of this country, yet too often their contribution is overlooked. GMB will continue to raise the profile of public service workers from across the sector, in all their diversity through the GMB public service super hero campaigns and look to hold campaign days to celebrate the tremendous role of public

service workers.

### 8.6 Building public services fit for the future

Fundamentally, public services should be available, free at the point of use, from cradle to grave for everyone. Our members who deliver these services are the experts on how as a society we meet this challenge and we're here to make their voices heard on why we need fit for future public services for the public delivered by public service workers.

## Conclusion

- 9.1 GMB is the union for local government workers and all those who deliver local government services. We are working to defend and improve conditions of employment thanks to our growing army of activists, who give up their own time to improve the lot of other workers.
- 9.2 The pattern of the cuts to local government services – which have fallen heaviest on economically deprived areas, and on low-paid workers, women workers, and vulnerable members of society – are an offence to the fundamental values that GMB was founded to uphold.
- 9.3 Local government in the UK is facing an unprecedented financial challenge that demands a combined industrial and political response.
- 9.4 GMB resolves to defend local jobs and services in an approach informed by the principles set out in the *GoPublic* campaign.
- 9.5 At a political level, we will continue to put pressure on the Government, employers, and the Labour Party for a significant injection of new funding that replaces the money that has been lost during a decade of austerity, including the provision of new money

## Local Government and Austerity: References

to fund future pay settlements.

9.6 We recognise that the position of the social care sector is especially acute, and GMB will continue to develop its campaign for a fair funding settlement, full compliance with minimum wage legislation, respect and fair compensation for care workers, and the introduction of national bargaining in the care sector.

9.7 In line with existing GMB policy, we will continue to push for an end to privatisation and outsourcing, an end to zero hours contracts and bogus self-employment, and the introduction of a real living wage of at least £10 an hour.

9.8 In this anniversary year of the union's creation, we are determined that GMB will continue to represent the interests of municipal workers for at least another 130 years as we redouble our efforts to grow and build the union.

## References

<sup>1</sup> "TaxPayers' Alliance," TPA welcomes crackdown on council newspapers and lobbyists, 11 February 2011

[https://www.taxpayersalliance.com/tpa\\_welcomes\\_crackdown\\_on\\_council\\_newspapers\\_and\\_lobbyists](https://www.taxpayersalliance.com/tpa_welcomes_crackdown_on_council_newspapers_and_lobbyists)

<sup>2</sup> NAO, Financial sustainability of local authorities 2018, 08 March 2018, pages 8 and 11

<https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Financial-sustainability-of-local-authorities-2018.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, page 15.

<sup>4</sup> Gray and Barford, Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society, The depths of the cuts: the uneven geography of local government austerity, November 2018, Table 2

<https://academic.oup.com/cjres/article/11/3/541/5123936#123189595>

<sup>5</sup> Ogle, Luchinskaya and Trickey, Austerity and Local Government in Wales: an analysis of income and spending priorities, 2009-10 to 2016-17, Wales Public Services 2025, 2017 – quoted in Sandford, House of Commons Library Briefing, Local authority financial resilience, 12 March 2019, page 15

<https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-8520>

<sup>6</sup> Audit Scotland / Accounts Commission, Local government in Scotland Challenges and performance 2019, March 2019, page 14 <http://www.audit->

## Local Government and Austerity: References

[scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2019/nr\\_190321\\_local\\_government\\_performance.pdf](https://scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2019/nr_190321_local_government_performance.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Audit Scotland / Accounts Commission, Local government in Scotland Financial overview 2017/18, November 2018, page 31 [http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2018/nr\\_181129\\_local\\_government\\_finance.pdf](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2018/nr_181129_local_government_finance.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Fraser of Allander Institute, Fiscal issues facing Local Government in Scotland, March 2017, page 12 <https://www.sbs.strath.ac.uk/economics/fraser/20170310-Fiscal-issues-facing-Local-Government-in-Scotland.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Northern Ireland Audit Office, Local Government Auditor's Report – 2018, 04 September 2018 [https://www.niauditoffice.gov.uk/sites/niao/files/media-files/NIAO\\_LGA%20report.pdf](https://www.niauditoffice.gov.uk/sites/niao/files/media-files/NIAO_LGA%20report.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> BBC News, Northamptonshire County Council bans spending again, 24 July 2018 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-northamptonshire-44937892>

<sup>11</sup> The Times, Surrey, UK's richest county, hit by £100m cash crisis, 08 February 2018 <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/surrey-uk-s-richest-county-hit-by-100m-cash-crisis-s6kvfxrhd>

<sup>12</sup> The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, County councils in crisis: three more named as showing signs of financial distress, 03 March 2018 <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2018-03-08/councils-in-crisis-three-more-named-as-showing-signs-of-financial-distress>

<sup>13</sup> BBC News, Poorest council areas 'hit hardest by cuts', say MPs, 28 January 2015 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-31012671>

<sup>14</sup> The Guardian, Surrey council leader 'had gentleman's agreement' with ministers, 07 March 2017 <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/mar/07/surrey-council-leader-had-gentlemans-agreement-with-ministers>

<sup>15</sup> LGA, Briefing for debate on local government funding, 15 January 2019 <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/LGA%20briefing%20-%20Debate%20on%20local%20government%20funding%20-%20HC%20150119.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> Based on the lowest and highest decile of households by income. ONS, Effects of taxes and benefits on household income, Table 2a <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/incomeandwealth/datasets/theeffectsoftaxesandbenefitsonhouseholdincomefinancialyearending2014>

<sup>17</sup> Corlett and Gardiner, Resolution Foundation, Options for reforming property taxation, March 2018 <https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/app/uploads/2018/03/Council-tax-IC.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> Amin-Smith, Phillips, and Simpson, IFS, Spending needs, tax revenue capacity and the business rates retention scheme, February 2018, page 41 <https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/R141.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee, High streets and town centres in 2030, page 3 <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcomloc/1010/1010.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> David Cameron, Mending our Broken Society, 22 January 2010 <https://conservativespeeches.sayit.mysociety.org/speech/601543> [note – speech now removed]

## Local Government and Austerity: References

<sup>21</sup> There were 3,615 Sure Start centres in April 2010. According to a recent Parliamentary Written Answer, 585 Sure Start centres closed between April 2010 and March 2019 – which equates to a net reduction of 19.3 per cent.

Caroline Dinenage MP response to Written Parliamentary Question from Angela Rayner MP, on Children's Centres, 28 March 2017 <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/writtenquestion/Commons/2017-03-23/69023/>; and

Lord Agnew response to Written Parliamentary Question from Lord Hain, on Children's Centres: Closures, 25 March 2019 <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-11/HL14383/>

<sup>22</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Live tables on house building: new build dwellings, Table 208 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-house-building>

<sup>23</sup> ONS, Deaths of homeless people in England and Wales: 2013 to 2017, 20 December 2018, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsofhomelesspeopleinenglandandwales/2013to2017>

<sup>24</sup> ONS, Deaths of homeless people in England and Wales – local authority estimates, 25 February 2019 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/deathsofhomelesspeopleinenglandandwaleslocalauthorityestimates>

<sup>25</sup> Shelter, Shelter research – In work, but out of a home, 19 July 2018 [https://england.shelter.org.uk/professional\\_resources/policy\\_and\\_research/policy\\_library/policy\\_library\\_folder/working\\_homelessness](https://england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/policy_and_research/policy_library/policy_library_folder/working_homelessness)

<sup>26</sup> The Guardian, Council funding for women's refuges cut by nearly £7m since 2010, 23 March 2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/mar/23/council-funding-womens-refuges-cut-since-2010-england-wales-scotland>

<sup>27</sup> Ministry of Housing and Local Government, Live tables on homelessness, data for April to June 2018 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness>

<sup>28</sup> Campaign for Better Transport, Buses in Crisis 2018, July 2018 <https://bettertransport.org.uk/buses-in-crisis-2018>

<sup>29</sup> Asphalt Industry Alliance, Annual Local Authority Road Maintenance Survey, 26 March 2019, <http://www.asphaltuk.org/wp-content/uploads/alarm-survey-2019-digital.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> The Independent, Cuts to children's services are pushing young people into violence and exploitation, experts warn, 26 February 2019 <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/children-social-services-cuts-uk-funding-youth-centres-councils-charities-violence-a8796241.html>

<sup>31</sup> BBC News, Bin collections: 1.8 million missed complaints in UK, 12 February 2019 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-47170939>

<sup>32</sup> BBC News, Life expectancy progress in UK 'stops for first time', 25 September 2018 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-45638646>; NHS, UK life expectancy drops while other western

## Local Government and Austerity: References

countries improve, 16 August 2018 <https://www.nhs.uk/news/medical-practice/uk-life-expectancy-drops-while-other-western-countries-improve/>

<sup>33</sup> County Councils Network, Counties issue budget warning and call for pre-spending review cash injection, 27 June 2018 <https://www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk/englands-largest-councils-issue-budget-warning-and-call-for-pre-spending-review-cash-injection/>

<sup>34</sup> Parker, The Official History of Privatisation: Volume 1, 2009, page 231.

<sup>35</sup> GMB analysis based on data published by HM Treasury and the Infrastructure Projects Authority, Private Finance Initiative and Private Finance 2 projects: 2017 summary data, December 2018 update <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/private-finance-initiative-and-private-finance-2-projects-2017-summary-data>

<sup>36</sup> The Guardian, Why have councils fallen out of love with outsourcing vital services?, 02 March 2016 <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/mar/02/councils-outsourcing-cumbria-public-private-partnership-in-house>

<sup>37</sup> Cabinet Office letter to GMB, 01 April 2019.

<sup>38</sup> Skills for Care National Minimum Dataset (accessed April 2019) <https://www.nmds-sc-online.org.uk/>

<sup>39</sup> The Observer, Labour 'will ban' outsourcing of public services to private firms, 24 March 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/mar/24/labour-ban-outsourcing-public-services-private-firms>

<sup>40</sup> The Guardian, Redundancies have cost English councils £4bn since 2010 – study, 13 September 2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/sep/13/councils-in-england-spend-4bn-on-220000-redundancies-since-2010>

<sup>41</sup> ONS, Public sector employment quarterly estimates, December 2018 data <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/datasets/publicsectoremploymentreferencetable>

<sup>42</sup> Civil Service World, Civil servants 'work more unpaid overtime than private sector staff,' 25 July 2017 <https://www.civilserviceworld.com/articles/news/civil-servants-%E2%80%98work-more-unpaid-overtime-private-sector-staff%E2%80%99>

<sup>43</sup> Dixon and Elston, LSE British Politics and Policy Blog, Austerity in English local government: why collaboration was not the answer after all, 19 March 2019 <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/councils-austerity-collaboration/>

<sup>44</sup> Local Government Chronicle, NJC comes under scrutiny, 09 September 2010 <https://www.lgcplus.com/politics/njc-comes-under-scrutiny/5018545.article>

<sup>45</sup> LGA, Stats on the LG workforce <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/workforce-and-hr-support/great-people-growing-places-working-together-future-local-6> and the Skills for Care National Minimum Dataset.

## Local Government and Austerity: References

- <sup>46</sup> GMB analysis based on ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) data and the Retail Price Index (RPI).
- <sup>47</sup> See GMB, Public Sector Pay and the Forgotten Three Million, September 2017, page 18  
<https://static.squarespace.com/static/58b828f44402436b74624b8a/t/59b6af5d2278e7557ed6c1c1/1505144781989/PAY+PINCH+REPORT+2+-+FINAL+SPREADS.pdf>
- <sup>48</sup> BBC News, George Osborne kept pay cap despite child poverty warning, 27 October 2018  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-45994303>
- <sup>49</sup> The Independent, Theresa May's keynote speech at Tory conference in full, 05 October 2016  
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/theresa-may-speech-tory-conference-2016-in-full-transcript-a7346171.html>
- <sup>50</sup> GMB, Public Sector Pay and the Forgotten Three Million, September 2017, pages 9 and 10  
<https://static.squarespace.com/static/58b828f44402436b74624b8a/t/59b6af5d2278e7557ed6c1c1/1505144781989/PAY+PINCH+REPORT+2+-+FINAL+SPREADS.pdf>
- <sup>51</sup> ONS, mid-year estimates of the population for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland,  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland>
- <sup>52</sup> Health and Social Care and Housing, Communities and Local Government Committees, Long-term funding of adult social care, page 7,  
<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcomloc/768/768.pdf>
- <sup>53</sup> NAO, Financial sustainability of local authorities 2018, 08 March 2018, pages 7 and 49  
<https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Financial-sustainability-of-local-authorities-2018.pdf>
- <sup>54</sup> Communities and Local Government Committee, Adult social care, 27 March 2017, page 26  
<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmcomloc/1103/1103.pdf>
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, page 41.
- <sup>56</sup> BEIS, Government announces additional support for social care providers, 26 July 2017  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-additional-support-for-social-care-providers>
- <sup>57</sup> Health and Social Care and Housing, Communities and Local Government Committees, Long-term funding of adult social care, page 10,  
<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcomloc/768/768.pdf>
- <sup>58</sup> ONS, One and three digit industry data 2007 to 2016, 22 May 2017  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/adhocs/007032oneandthreedigitindustrydata2007to2016>
- <sup>59</sup> Lurgan Mail, ABC council backtracks opting to keep leisure services in-house, 26 February 2019  
<https://www.lurganmail.co.uk/news/abc-council-backtracks-opting-to-keep-leisure-services-in->

## Local Government and Austerity: References

[house-1-8825131](#)

<sup>60</sup> Reading Chronicle, Majority of Reading Borough Council's privatisation proposals axed, 14 November 2018 <https://www.readingchronicle.co.uk/news/17223704.majority-of-reading-borough-councils-privatisation-proposals-axed/>

<sup>61</sup> Brent & Kilburn Times, Brent Council's cleaning services bought back in house following tenant and union complaints, 15 January 2019 <https://www.kilburntimes.co.uk/news/brent-brings-back-estate-cleaning-services-into-council-s-control-1-5852749>

<sup>62</sup> BBC News, Sheffield bin workers walk out in 24-hour strike action over pay, 05 October 2016 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-37560271>; BBC News, Sheffield councillor Jack Scott resigns after strikes, 18 November 2014 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-30102792>

<sup>63</sup> See GMB Midlands and East Coast Region's campaign website <https://www.gmblocal.org.uk/>

<sup>64</sup> The Westmorland Gazette, CUMBRIA COUNCIL: Great jobs agenda backed, 22 March 2019 <https://www.thewestmorlandgazette.co.uk/news/17521935.cumbria-council-great-jobs-agenda-backed/>

<sup>65</sup> Dundee Evening Telegraph, Care workers win split shifts fight against Dundee City Council, 01 April 2019 <https://www.eveningtelegraph.co.uk/fp/care-workers-win-split-shifts-fight-with-dundee-city-council/>

<sup>66</sup> GMB Scotland Statement, 07 February 2019 <https://www.gmbscotland.org.uk/campaigns/equal-pay/overview>

<sup>67</sup> GMWU, Report of Sixty-Second Congress, 1977, page 122: *'In the first year of the implementation of the Equal Pay Act the GMWU has successfully prosecuted a number of cases before Industrial Tribunals... Indeed, Sister Valerie Perry, a member of the GMWU, was the first woman to win a case under the Act.'*

TUC Library film, Cooking up a Storm: Julie Hayward's Equal Value Victory, <http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/sisterhood/clips/equality-and-work/equal-pay/146389.html>