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Local Government Unions call for 10% pay rise and shorter working week

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.

Commenting on the claim **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."

My name is Jane Cowan – rep at Rochdale Boroughwide Housing.

I attended conference 18th -21st June in Liverpool for the first time, not knowing what to expect. I would like to take this chance to reflect upon my experience. It brings together delegates from across the union to decide the Unions Policies and Priorities for the next 12 months.

We heard from lots of delegate speakers, who made great speeches about each other's lives and struggles public and private works are facing every day. Conference agreed a number of rule changes, one which I think is a good change -allowing for an Annual Young Members Conference. Young Workers need Unions and Unions need them as they are our future.

If you ever considered going to Conference give it a try. I gained a lot of knowledge as an activist supporting members and people in the workplace. I had a pleasurable and memorable experience leaving feeling inspired.

Two simple ways to join UNISON today:

www.joinunison.org

Call UNISON
0800 171 2193

UNISON tells Government to think again on Local Government Pension plans

UNISON has called on the government to rethink its plans to allow universities and colleges in England to opt out of offering membership of the local government pension scheme to new non-teaching staff.

Responding to the formal consultation on the plans, the union said that the government's plans are unlikely to achieve the savings being talked about, and it "strongly believes" the proposals should be subject to a formal equality impact assessment. The consultation response pointed out that the LGPS is an affordable scheme, and the costs of its benefits have recently fallen rather than risen. The answer to the chronic underfunding of public services currently affecting all areas, including education and especially colleges, is not to withdraw benefits negotiated in good faith, where reassurances were given in 2012 that changes would not be made again for 25 years, the union told the government and it certainly isn't appropriate to deny a decent pension scheme to predominantly low-paid women.

In addition, UNISON argued in response to the proposals that:

- If the changes are taken up by colleges and universities in England, it will lead to a two-tier workforce in pensions, with new starters being offered inferior and less cost-effective pensions;

- They are most likely to affect lower-paid members of staff and mainly women – which could lead to a future legal challenge that could overturn the proposal and be costly to employers;

- A proportion of employers closing membership of the scheme to new starters could lead to serious cash flow problems for LGPS funds, with a shortfall of contributions at the same time as the number of pensioners increase;

- An employer who closes the LGPS to future membership could face higher contributions in the future to cover the LGPS pensions that have already been built up for its staff, which would offset any savings achieved by offering a cheaper and inferior scheme to new starters;

- Even in the short term, the cost of setting up inferior pension arrangements could reduce any potential savings to the employer;

On top of that, the union said that all proposed changes to the LGPS should be negotiated through the governance structures of the LGPS. It argued that the current proposals undermine the work being done by the LGPS scheme advisory board to come up for solutions for LGPS employers that are finding it a challenge to remain in the scheme.

PROTEST THE TORY PARTY CONFERENCE 2019



National Demonstration
Sunday 29 September 2019
Assemble 12pm, Oxford Road, Manchester M15 6BH

THIS TORY GOVERNMENT IS A DISASTER. BORIS JOHNSON HAS NO MANDATE AND YET HE THUNDERS ON WRECKING OUR NHS AND IGNORING THE CRISES FACED BY OUR PUBLIC SERVICES.

WHEN HE AND THE REST OF HIS CRONIES ARRIVE IN MANCHESTER FOR THE TORY PARTY CONFERENCE WE WILL BE ON THE STREETS IN OUR THOUSANDS. JOIN US ON 29TH SEPTEMBER. BRING YOUR FAMILY. BRING YOUR FRIENDS. If you want to go with Rochdale UNISON members meet at Rochdale Train Station at 11am.