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How can a pay rise leave you worse off?

A ballot paper will soon be dropping through your door if you work in Local Government and schools. UNISON is asking you to vote YES to strike for a better pay deal. But why?

Below inflation

The employers' offer is a pay rise of £1925. This is a lot of money and some people will wonder why we don't just take the offer.

To explain it we have to look at how bills are rising.

Shopping bills have gone up by 19% in the last year and are set to increase again this year.

Nursery fees are predicted to go up by an average of £1000 this year.

Rents have gone up by an average of 4.7% the highest increase in more than ten years and are set to go up again this year.

Mortgage rates are increasing too because the Bank of England has put up interest rates. The average mortgage will go up by between £15 and £25 per month this year. That's on top of large rises last year. Average mortgage costs will be between £3200 and £5000 higher this year than they were before December 2021. The Bank of England think we all have to get used to being poorer.

Water rates have gone up by 7.5% this year, the highest rise in nearly 20 years. They can't even keep the sewage out of our rivers and beaches but they have no shame in putting our bills up.

Gas and electricity prices have fallen but energy companies are not passing this on to consumers and the Government have taken away the support they were giving to most people with their bills. So energy bills will remain high this year over £2000 on average. That's over £1000 a year more than it was in 2020.

Overall inflation is running at 13.4%.

On top of this the Government has not increased the level where you start paying tax so you will be paying more tax on any pay increase you get this year.

UNISON's claim Vs Employer's offer

UNISON's claim is for a pay increase that matches inflation so that we don't fall further behind.

Current Salary	Employers Offer 2023-24	Unison's claim 2023-24	How much you lose if you accept the employers offer
£20,812	£22,737	£23,445	-£718
£25,409	£27,334	£28,635	-£1301
£30,151	£32,076	£33,980	-£1904

Your workplace pension is based on your salary so taking a below inflation pay offer now will also reduce the value of your pension when you retire.

We have already had years of below inflation rises and the employers will keep on reducing our real terms pay every year unless we show them we won't put up with it.

That is why we are asking you to vote Yes to strike action for a decent pay increase.

We will not be alone in rejecting below inflation pay. We will be joining nurses, teachers, doctors, railway workers, civil servants, university and college lecturers who have all decided to strike instead of accepting a pay increase that will make us poorer.

The ballot opens on 23rd May and runs until 4th July. Vote YES, talk to your friends at work about the strike and joining UNISON.

<https://unisonpaycalculator.co.uk/>

UNISON School Uniform Grants 1st June

The 2023 School Uniform Grant Programme will open twice on 1st June 2023 at the following times:

- 1000 applicants at 8.30am
- 1000 applicants at 5pm

Applications will be made online. You cannot apply before these times.

<https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you/school-uniform-grant/>

What can I get help with?

We can help with a one-off grant of £50 per school aged child, up to a maximum of £150. We want to make this fund go as far as possible and help as many members as we can. Please only apply if you are in financial difficulty. There is a limited amount in the School Uniform Grant Fund.

How do I apply?

All applications should be made online. Make sure you have your membership number to hand.

What if I don't know my membership number?

We cannot accept applications without a membership number. This can often be found at the bottom of any emails you have received from UNISON, alternatively, please contact UNISON direct on 0800 0 857 857.

If you are unable to complete the application due to an accessibility issue, or have any questions, please email: sug@unison.co.uk or call UNISON direct on 0800 0 857 857.

Please check that your UNISON colleagues have received this newsletter electronically—if not please ask them to contact the branch on 01706 925952 or [email unison@rochdale.gov.uk](mailto:email.unison@rochdale.gov.uk) so we can update their membership record