

GMB and other unions are proposing a bottom-loaded increase yielding more for the lowest paid and overall it would add less than 3% to the paybill

GMB, UNISON and UNITE public service unions, have today (26 October), submitted a 2.5% or £500 pay claim on behalf of some 1.5 million local government workers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The claim covers care assistants, cleaners, teaching assistants, librarians, social workers and refuse collectors among others, who are at the bottom of the public sector pay league.

Brian Strutton, GMB National Secretary, said: **“GMB is very clear that our 2010 pay claim is affordable and no more than council workers deserve. We are proposing a bottom-loaded increase yielding more for the lowest paid and overall it would add less than 3% to the paybill.**

Our careful research of local authorities finances shows that this level of increase can be sustained. Local Government employees have had low pay rises for years and have been through restructuring after restructuring to make efficiency savings, so this claim is no more than they deserve.

Given the huge and continuing pay rises and bonuses that those at the top of society are still enjoying, GMB sees no reason why the ordinary workers shouldn't be treated fairly and we will back our members to the hilt to ensure that they are.”

Heather Wakefield, UNISON's Head of Local Government, said: **“The 2.5% claim is modest and takes account of the tough economic climate and the predicted inflation rate for next year. We believe this claim is both realistic and affordable.**

Local Government workers are playing a vital role in helping communities through the recession, offering practical support alongside debt and housing advice. I would urge the employers to settle this claim quickly and allow council workers to focus on the job in hand, delivering quality public services.”

Peter Allenson, National Officer for Unite the union, said: **“The claim submitted is more than reasonable. Local Government staff provide vital services to the local community.**

They deserve every last penny of this proposed increase and, without it, services will suffer.”

End

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