

## **GMB AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIONS OUTRAGED AT PAY FREEZE**

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Local government unions, GMB, UNISON and UNITE, representing 1.6 million workers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, have today been told that their members face a pay freeze in 2010/2011.

The unions are calling on the local government employers to think again, saying that local government workers will struggle to afford basic essentials, with nearly 3% inflation rendering the pay freeze a real terms pay cut. The unions are calling for them to come to their senses and make a reasonable offer, saying that there is room in council budgets to give workers decent pay.

Brian Strutton, GMB National Secretary, said: **“Council workers will be absolutely furious about this and I'm personally appalled at the arrogance of the employers. There has been no discussion, no negotiation - just a political decision by conservative controlled local government.**

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**We will now hold an urgent meeting of the trade union side to determine our plan of action. I guarantee the mood will be very angry.”**

**UNISON Head of Local Government, Heather Wakefield, said: “The employer’s decision to cut our members' pay without negotiation is a slap in the face for hard working council employees who have kept local communities together through the crisis.**

**Two thirds already earn less than £18k a year. Last year George Osborne, Tory shadow chancellor said the Tories would not freeze pay for those earning in this pay bracket, now the Tory LGA is doing just that.**

**Our members are already covering posts left vacant by wide-spread redundancies. 75% of the workforce are women so this is an outright attack on women's pay.**

**We know that councils can afford an increase. Council reserves have grown, while many have chosen to cut their own income by freezing council tax. Our members will be outraged by this threatened pay freeze.**

**The trade unions will meet urgently to consider the next steps.”**

**Peter Allenson, National Officer for Unite the union, said: “There has been absolutely no negotiation with the employers. We have had a position put to us**

**that will effectively reduce our members' living standards. There is no justification for what I would call a pay freeze, and our members would be angry and outraged to say the least.**

**The employers should reconsider and come to negotiating table as soon as possible. In the mean time we will consult our members on the next steps.”**

**Ends**

**Contact:** Brian Strutton, GMB National Secretary on 07860 606137 or GMB Press Office: Steve Pryle 07921 289880 or Rose Conroy 07974 252183.

**Notes to Editors:**

UNISON, UNITE and GMB public service unions submitted a claim in October last year for 2.5% or £500. The claim covers local government staff working as care assistants, cleaners, teaching assistants, librarians, social workers and refuse collectors among others, many of whom are at the bottom of the public sector pay league.