

MOTION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY TO COUNCIL: A FULLY FUNDED, FAIR PAY RISE FOR COUNCIL AND SCHOOL WORKERS

This council notes:

Local government has endured central government funding cuts of more than 50% since 2010. Between 2010 and 2020, councils lost 60p out of every £1 received from central government. Research by UNISON has shown that councils across England, Wales, and Scotland are facing a collective funding shortfall of more than £4bn by the financial year 2024/25 and a cumulative funding gap of £8bn by 2025/26. The last Government's 'levelling up' pots of money did little to help.

Council and school workers kept our communities safe through the pandemic, often putting themselves at considerable risk as they worked to protect public health, provide quality housing, ensure children continued to be educated, and care for older and vulnerable people.

Since 2010, the local government workforce has endured years of pay restraint, with the majority of pay points losing at least 25 per cent of their value since 2009/10. Staff have faced the worst cost of living crisis in a generation.

At the same time, workers have experienced ever-increasing workloads and persistent job insecurity. Across the UK, 900,000 jobs have been lost in local government since June 2010 – a reduction of more than 30 per cent. Local government has arguably suffered more severe job losses than any other part of the public sector. Women have been disproportionately impacted, making up more than three-quarters of the local government workforce.

Recent research shows that if the Government were to fully fund the unions' 2025 pay claim, around half of the money would be recouped through increased tax revenue, reduced expenditure on benefits and tax credits, and increased consumer spending in the local economy.

This council believes:

1. Local government workers keep our communities clean and safe, look after those in need, and keep our towns and cities running.
2. Without the professionalism and dedication of our staff, the council services our residents rely on would not be deliverable.
3. Local government workers deserve a fair, real-terms pay increase. The Government must take responsibility and fully fund this increase, rather than shifting the burden onto local authorities, whose funding has been cut to the bone and who were not given adequate support during the Covid-19 pandemic.
4. Any pay award should be properly funded by central government.

This council resolves to:

A. Support the principle of the pay claim submitted by UNISON, GMB, and Unite on behalf of council and school workers, while recognising that any pay award must be fully funded by central government to avoid placing additional financial strain on local authorities.

B. Call on the Local Government Association to make urgent representations to central government to fund the NJC pay claim in full.

C. Write to the Chancellor and Secretary of State to call for a properly funded pay increase for local government workers, ensuring that any award is met with new money from central government.

D. Meet with local NJC union representatives to convey support for the principle of fair pay and discuss practical ways in which the council can advocate for proper funding of pay awards.

E. Encourage all local government workers to join a union.
