

All Key Workers' Deserve a Pay Rise

The announcement by the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, of a public sector pay freeze (except for those in the NHS or earning under £24,000) is a disgrace.

At the beginning of the pandemic the nation clapped key workers for weeks. Care workers, Bin workers, Social Workers, Repairs Operatives, School Staff and other frontline staff worked through this pandemic, sometimes at huge personal risk. The thanks from the Government of a pay freeze is a slap in the face. Clapping doesn't pay the bills.

Tory Myths

The Tories are trying to justify the pay freeze by trying to divide public sector workers from private sector workers by saying private sector workers have suffered the most.

Since 2010 public sector workers have endured ten years of austerity paying for the bailing out of the banks. Not only were hundreds of thousands of jobs lost, but the real value of pay across local government fell by a staggering 20%!

Is it fair that the public sector is once again expected to pay the cost of the COVID crisis?

The Government is yet to raise any money by closing the tax loopholes used by big multi-national companies to dodge paying their fair share of taxes. Not one penny has been raised by taxing the super-rich.

With all surveys showing the rich getting even richer year after year, surely it is time that those with the biggest shoulders bared the burden of the financial cost of COVID.

Family Fortunes of the Chancellor

Whilst freezing the pay of millions of public sector workers, Rishi Sunak's family sit on a huge fortune.

Although not declared on the ministerial register, his wife's shares in her father's company are worth £430million, making her richer than the Queen! The total wealth of the family is reported to be £1.7Billion!

Perhaps this explains why there are no extra taxes on the rich? Nice to know we are all in this together.

Sandwell College Pay Award

UNISON members at Sandwell College have voted 94% to accept a pay offer of 3.1% from 1 August 2020 and a further 1% from 1 August 2021. The 2021 rate potentially increases to 1.25% should student numbers increase by 300.

Sandwell College also re-iterated its commitment to observe minimum pay levels in line with the voluntary Foundation Living Wage, which means the minimum scale point increases to £9.50 per hour from 1 August 2020.

The collective agreement included the UCU and NEU trade unions, with all three agreeing. The quick consultations conducted by the trade unions means members should receive the increase in their December pay packets.

Strike at Sandwell Leisure Trust - 18 December

Despite being offered extra support from Sandwell Council, Sandwell Leisure Trust have decided to dismiss and re-engage all staff to move them away from NJC pay, terms and conditions.

Dismissal notices and new contracts have been issued.

Both UNISON and GMB members working across all leisure centres will be taking strike action on Friday 18th December.

The pandemic is being used as an excuse to launch this unnecessary attack. Send your Xmas solidarity greetings to sandwellunison@btconnect.com