

UNISON to ballot council staff over strike action

The country's largest union is to ballot council staff in Scotland, in the largest vote of its kind in recent years.

The pay offer made recently by employers Cosla of a 3% increase has been condemned as "pitiful" by the union. UNISON says household budgets remain under pressure, with inflation, rent, council tax and energy bills all set to rise.

The union has told Cosla that strike ballots are due to be issued on Thursday 1 May.

UNISON Scotland co-lead for local government David O'Connor said: "This pay offer is at best a thinly veiled pay cut. After years of below-inflation pay awards, council wages have plummeted by a fifth. This pitiful offer only adds insult to injury to these essential workers.

"Council staff work tirelessly to keep local services running. They deserve better. A pay rise that leaves many people struggling financially won't help local authorities hold onto their workforce. Cosla should think again and come back with an improved offer."

UNISON Scotland local government chair Susanne Gens said: "This offer is simply not good enough. Energy bills are through the roof and rent and council tax are soaring. This inadequate pay offer forces council staff into impossible situations just to try to balance household bills.

“Council staff are essential to local communities, caring for the vulnerable, educating our children and maintaining essential services.

“This offer came just before The Scottish Government offered health workers 4.25%. Council staff are no less valuable and deserve a fair pay settlement that reflects the essential services they provide.”



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