Why we're striking

We local government workers empty the bins, clean the schools, educate and care for children, look after the elderly, and vulnerable, conduct marriages and civil partnerships, care for parks, and check the safety of the food on your table.

We do it all despite savage cuts to vital services. Almost half a million of our jobs have gone. Those of us left are doing far more for far less.

We have worked hard to get employers to negotiate a deal, but the employers won’t even talk to us about a better offer, or join us for independent arbitration.

So now we are going on strike 14th October 2014

Most UNISON members are low-paid, part-time women workers, struggling to pay their household bills. Losing pay for strike action is not something they do lightly.

Our members are not asking for the 14% pay increase company bosses and bankers are getting. Or the 11% MPs will see. They are just asking for a rise of at least £1 an hour.

That would mean almost half a million council and school support workers currently earning below the Living Wage of £7.65 an hour could come off in-work benefits.

UNISON members: 5 reasons to go on strike

1. You can’t afford another pay and pension cut

The current government offer leaves most workers with pay worth almost 20% less than in 2010. Falling pay also means loss of pension for the rest of your life.

2. You are worth fair pay for the work you do

Your pay and conditions are the worst in the public sector - from top to bottom.

3. Taking another pay cut won’t save jobs and services

Despite a pay freeze, jobs have gone and services continue to be stripped to the bone, privatised or stopped all together. There’s no reason to believe a pay cut will stop this.

4. All this will continue unless we act now
Low pay is bad for workers and bad for the economy. That’s why politicians from all parties are calling for an end to low pay. Many local government workers rely on benefits to pay bills. Right now, the taxpayer is subsidising local government to pay poverty wages.

5. **Our claim for a minimum of £1 more an hour for all is affordable**

Paying all local government workers a living wage will boost Treasury coffers by around £0.9bn every year from increased tax and national insurance take - shifting many off in-work benefits and reducing the bill to taxpayers.