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Press Release –Embargo 11 October 2011

11/10/2011

Biggest Ballot In History Opens As Council Workers Cast Pensions Strike Vote

Ballot papers will start dropping through post boxes from today (11th October 2011) as Council Workers in Staffordshire begin voting on taking strike action over planned changes to public sector pensions.

Strike action is the last resort for council workers. It follows months of talks in which Ministers have refused to move on from the hard line stance to make public sector workers work longer, pay more and get less when they retire. The plans are not about pensions – they are about deficit reduction.

Jane Heath, Branch Secretary said:

“It’s important to understand that none of the extra contributions savings generated by these changes will go towards improving anyone’s pension. Instead they are being imposed to help the Treasury pay off the debts created by the banking crisis and pave the way for tax cuts for the better off.

“Reforms made 4 years ago brought in changes to make the local government scheme affordable and sustainable. We are urging our members to vote YES in the ballot for industrial action. We know our members won’t make the decision to strike lightly but they have been left with little choice. The pensions plans are just another way of making public sector workers pay for the recession. It is a tax on low paid workers and comes on top of heavy job losses and a 2-year pay freeze at a time of high inflation.”

“We do not want to harm the public and we know that we can count on their support. We will be asking them to join our campaigns for decent pensions for all workers – public and private sector.”

“The average pension in local government is £4,000 per annum, dropping to just £2,800 for women (less than £56 per week). These are not gold plated pensions.”

ENDS.
