

# Agenda Item 10b

## **AGENDA ITEM 10(b) PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS PAY FREEZE**

Delete in Para 3 the words " who are now facing a pay freeze imposed by the Government." And replace with " whose pay levels are determined by the National Joint Committee in consultation with the local government sector."

After Paragraph 3 add

Council notes that the government has used pay freezes previously at times of financial distress. This includes when LibDem Danny Alexander was Chief Secretary to the Treasury. It notes that at the time of the 2010 Spending Review he said 'When we came into office, we inherited an economy that was on the brink with the largest budget deficit in Europe'. That is true once again.

It further notes that the Council's financial position for the coming year is under pressure and that if pay levels are frozen that position will be easier to resolve than would otherwise be the case.

delete paragraph 5 and replace with

Council notes that the decision on whether to freeze pay for local government employees will be made by the National Joint Committee and that the council always has the option to withdraw from the scheme and set its own pay levels.

Council believes that if the Cabinet considers public sector pay freezes to be unfair that it should lobby the NJC and consider withdrawing from the scheme. It notes that the Council always has the option of reducing spending on frontline services or holding a referendum on a council tax increase to provide the funding.

Proposed by (Name) Councillor Luke Stubbs

Seconded by (Name) Councillor Donna Jones

Motion to therefore read:

Over the last nine months communities across the UK have come to rely on the exceptional work council workers have put in to protect and support local residents during the pandemic.

Just as in the NHS care workers, and others, have put their own health on the line to support and protect people suffering from Coronavirus, so have council workers. We have come to understand that key workers are a much wider group of people than we used to think they were.

In Portsmouth the City Council has created an isolation unit to take people coming out of hospital and to care for them until they are free from the virus, before they return to their own care homes. This is to break the cycle of infection between hospitals and care homes of elderly and vulnerable residents. This unit is staffed completely by council employees, whose pay levels are determined by the National Joint Committee in consultation with the local government sector.

Council notes that the government has used pay freezes previously at times of financial distress. This includes when LibDem Danny Alexander was Chief Secretary to the Treasury. It notes that at the time of the 2010 Spending Review he said 'When we came into office, we inherited an economy that was on the brink with the largest budget deficit in Europe'. That is true once again.

It further notes that the Council's financial position for the coming year is under pressure and that if pay levels are frozen that position will be easier to resolve than would otherwise be the case.

This council rejects the idea of a pay freeze on public sector workers whose efforts to give care and support during the pandemic have been superhuman.

Council notes that the decision on whether to freeze pay for local government employees will be made by the National Joint Committee and that the council always has the option to withdraw from the scheme and set its own pay levels.

Council believes that if the Cabinet considers public sector pay freezes to be unfair that it should lobby the NJC and consider withdrawing from the scheme. It notes that the Council always has the option of reducing spending on frontline services or holding a referendum on a council tax increase to provide the funding.