

The latest news and announcements from Derbyshire UNISON

Public spending

Public sector workers need pay commitment



Out-of-touch chancellor is sacrificing public services

A tax cut two years away won't help anyone struggling to make ends meet now.

Responding to comments last week by the chancellor that two years of public spending 'discipline' will be needed to deliver his 1% tax cut in 2024, UNISON general secretary Christina McAnea said:

"The chancellor's mask has slipped. A tax cut two years away won't help anyone struggling to make ends meet now. But it will mean cutting back essential public services and the wages of the hard-working people delivering them taking a pummelling.

"Healthcare assistants, teaching

assistants and refuse collectors will suffer financial hardship and real pay cuts so Rishi Sunak can increase his popularity before an election, boosting his chances of moving in to number ten.

"Hard-up families at the sharp end, making heart breaking decisions about their finances, got zip from the spring statement.

"The chancellor has zero grasp of the harsh reality of real people's lives. His suggestion that a small increase in the minimum wage means they're 'well paid' makes that clear.

"Try telling a care worker or a

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hospital porter who has to put back essential items at the checkout because they don't have enough money that pay restraint is an option.

"People are turning off boilers, wondering if they can afford to use the cooker or turn on a light and going without tea so their children can eat because finances are so stretched.

Treats are a distant memory. This is a living nightmare for many and one the government seems unable to comprehend.

"Even the lowest measure of inflation is more than twice the 3% rise ministers think NHS staff deserve this year, even though they're continuing to battle with the pandemic and its aftermath.

"The people who kept services going are being told to simply suck it up. And while everyone is suffering, what happens to public services matters to us all.

"With understaffing rife in the health and care sectors, pay restraint is no way to keep hold of skilled people, never mind attract the recruits so desperately needed.

"Despite promises to the contrary, it's clear the public sector pay freeze is far from over. Unless the workers providing essential services are given a wage rise that puts inflation in the shade, it's a pay cut, pure and simple."