



20 January 2010

NIPSA CONDEMNS PAY FREEZE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE WORKERS

NIPSA, the public service union, condemned the announcement made today by Local Government Employers that they would be imposing a pay freeze for 2010/11. The Local Government NJC pay agreement applies to a number of Northern Ireland's public service employers, including:-

- 26 Local Councils;
- Non-teaching staff across the Education Sector;
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive;
- Libraries Authority Northern Ireland; and
- a number of other public sector employers such as Housing Associations, Community and Voluntary Bodies.

Without any negotiations on the Unions Pay Claim for 2.5% or £500 (whichever is the greater) the employers side announced today that an annual pay rise for 2010/11 would not be made due to the "perfect storm" of falling revenues, rising demand and in seeking to protect front-line services and minimising job losses.

NIPSA Assistant General Secretary Bumper Graham said:

"The pay claim is a modest one and in reality would have done little to have lifted tens of thousands of low-paid workers out of the poverty trap, even if it had been met in full. For the NJC employers to impose a pay freeze shows that they are prepared to make the lowest paid workers pay for failures of the Government, the Banks and their inability to fund essential public services."

NIPSA represents over 15,000 members who are tied to the NJC pay agreement. The vast majority of these members are female and many are part-time, working as Classroom Assistants, Frontline Housing Advice Staff and in the lowest paid clerical and administrative jobs in Councils.

Bumper Graham stated:

"NIPSA will be seeking to enter into urgent discussions with the other NJC Trade Unions. In doing so we will be demanding that a robust stance is taken, including the balloting of members for a sustained campaign of industrial action. With inflation set to go over 4% and NJC members already on the lowest pay we cannot accept this massive real pay cut. This is not about affordability it's about attacking vulnerable public sector workers and making them pay for economic mismanagement."

ENDS