

Reject the deal!



Lambeth Unison members holding up 'reject the deal' signs at the 2012 AGM

Earlier this month, 300 Unison members in Lambeth attended our AGM and voted unanimously to 'reject the deal' (Heads of Agreement) that UNISON's Service Group Executives (SGEs) had voted to accept. Members felt strongly that the proposed deal would still force workers to work longer, pay more into their pensions and get less when they retire.

Although the 'deal' delays the increase in employee contributions that was due to be imposed between 2012 and 2015 to pay the Treasury's £900 million pensions tax, it still makes workers pay that £900 million by bringing in the new scheme a year earlier – from April 2014 rather than April 2015.

The "deal" has no detail in it – but accepts that the Treasury paper issued on 2 November will be the basis for negotiating the new scheme:

- * Increased Employee Contributions of on average 3% (up to 9.5% for most members)
- * Ending Final Salary Scheme – with 1/60 Accrual Rate (which is worth less than 1/60 final salary)
- * Raising Retirement Age in line with State Retirement Age to at least 68

The government say we can negotiate on all these elements - but only within the same "cost envelope" so that any

improvement in one element has to be paid by worsening another- for example for lower contributions we would have to accept working even longer than proposed or getting even worse pensions when we retire.

The meeting also voted to agree the following motion for submission to the National Head of Local Government; *"this Branch requisitions a Special Conference of the Local Government Service Group to consider the policy of the Service Group in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme"*.

Lambeth is just one of the many branches up and down the country which is calling for a special conference but in order to call one, we need 25% of branches to issue that call.

The PCS, NUT, NASUWT, UCU, Unite (health and local government) and UCAC unions have refused to sign up to the deal. Unison should too! The magnificent strike on 30 November showed that millions of workers are up for a fight and together we can win!

Act now to get your branch to issue the call for a special conference so we can continue to fight for the pensions we deserve. Reject the deal!