

# Southampton buses facing Christmas closure



**There's still time to sort this if Unilink want to, but it is firmly in management's hands.**

GMB, the union for Southampton bus drivers, are preparing to ballot their members who work as drivers for the city's Unilink bus company.

The dispute is over pay, as the drivers have turned down the employer's offer of a 5.28 per cent rise, which would raise their pay to an hour rate of £14.74.

The ballot opens on Friday 17 November, with any potential action then set to take place in the run up to Christmas.



**Nicola Nixon, GMB Regional Organiser said:**

“GMB members are in rejecting this offer sending a clear message to Unilink’s Operations Director David Lee-Kong: the company’s offer does not meet a real valuation of the contribution they bring as employees to the business.

“£14.74 an hour for driving the bus but also being responsible for the safety of 70 or more passengers is an extremely stressful job, all whilst maintaining a challenging service schedule and trying to negotiate Southampton’s ever-busy city streets.

“Our members simply want a rate that reflects that and the last thing they want is to take action, but they are appalled that their employer has not been more realistic in pay talks.

“There’s still time to sort this out if Unilink want to, as any strike action wouldn’t be taking place for a few weeks – it is though firmly in David’s hands.

“All they need to do is put an offer of 15 per cent on the table, which our members rightly think they’re worth, and these hard-working Unilink staff will continue to go that extra mile for their passengers and the company.”

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**Member requiring help?**

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